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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTOCENTRIC ECCLESIOLOGY OF JOHANN ADAM MÖHLER

VOLUME ONE

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INTRODUCTION

"In uno et altero Ecclesia est, Ecclesia vero Christus,"[1] Tertullian wrote when assuring penitents that, at least once after Baptism, they would find pardon for all sins in the Church. For the Church is Christ now present in the world. This is a visible presence, a Church whose members can be enumerated even if the number be merely one or two. It is indeed that clarity and certainty regarding the Church, based upon its incarnational principle rooted in Christ, which permits the African theologian to be so definite in his promise of forgiveness for sinners. Some years later and now an ardent Montanist, Tertullian heatedly denied the Church's power to forgive any and every sin even once after Baptism. Adultery, for example, excluded an already baptized person from the Church forever. Now he attacked precisely the claim which he had once made, that the Church, the concrete, visible community under the leadership of clearly defined officials, can forgive all sin. For the true Church is the community of the holy, those regenerated in the Spirit, and who can speak with assurance for that

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[1] De poenitentia X, ed. J.-P. Migne, Patrologiae Latinae . . . cursus completus, 217 vols. (Paris, 1844-1855), 1:1245.

Church save a charismatic leader raised up by the Spirit? "Nam et Ecclesia proprie et principaliter ipse est Spiritus in quo est trinitas unius divinitatis, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus," he wrote.[1] Clearly a marked change has taken place in the basis of Tertullian's ecclesiology. A Christocentric ecclesiology had supported a visible Church with an official hierarchy and authoritative sacraments. The later pneumatocentric ecclesiology seems to entail an essentially invisible Church with a purely charismatic leadership and an enfeebled sacramental system.

Seventeen centuries after Tertullian, Johann Adam Möhler's concern to find a viable ecclesiology for the Catholic revival in Germany led him from pneumatocentrism to Christocentrism. It is that movement which I have sought to trace.

Möhler research may be conveniently divided into two categories, historical and theological. By the first I intend those studies which have sought to trace influences on the formation of Möhler's thought, especially with regard to ecclesiology, the theory of doctrinal development, and theological anthropology, and to discern his influence on subsequent figures and movements. In large part these studies have been carried out in a polemical atmosphere. Somewhat more recently attention has shifted to specifically theological study of Möhler, i.e., to the attempt to re-examine his work in relation to contemporary theological concerns, to see the indebtedness of much of current Roman Catholic thought to the Tübingen professor.

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[1] *De pudicitia* XXI, ibid., 2:1026.

The historical research has centered in three areas. The first is concerned with Möhler as the end-point of one development and with his career as the transition to another, and so examines him in relation to the past; the second takes him as the starting point of a new current, and so examines his relation to the future; the third tries to set him in the context of his own time.

The first group of studies is then concerned with the relationship of Möhler's ecclesiological development to the Febronianism of the later eighteenth century and the first years of the nineteenth. Thus Alois Schmid saw a movement in Möhler from "presbyterianism" to "episcopalism" to "papalism," a growth from Gallicanism to what the post-Vatican I Schmid accepted as orthodox.[1] A similar position was taken by Fritz Vigener, although he was somewhat less enthusiastic about such a movement.[2] In opposition, others argued that, throughout his brief career, Möhler's intentions were orthodox by Vatican I standards although his expression may have been originally inadequate.[1]

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[1] "Der geistige Entwicklungsgang J. A. Möhlers," Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft 18 (1897): 322-356, 572-599.

[2] Gallikanismus und episkopalistische Strömungen im deutschen Katholizismus zwischen Tridentinum und Vatikanum (Munich and Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1913) and in greater detail in Drei Gestalten aus dem modernen Katholizismus: Möhler, Diepenbrock, Döllinger (Munich and Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1926).

The second discussion can best be exemplified by the synthesizing study of the Catholic Tübingen school of Edmond Vermeil.[2] According to this view, romantic idealism led the Tübingen school, with Möhler as its most brilliant and forceful member, to recast Catholic theology in new forms, not always adequate to the tradition. The thought-forms thus produced remained active in Germany but also passed into England and France, blossoming later in Tyrrell and Loisy. Although the latter heatedly rejected this parentage, the same thesis continued to be advanced by others.[3] Two unproven (and, in fact, erroneous) assumptions stand at the base of this reading of Möhler, especially as set forth by Vermeil, who constantly quotes Drey, Möhler, and Staudenmaier as evidence for one another's opinions: that there is no marked difference between Möhler's views at the beginning and the end of his career, and that remarkable unanimity prevailed within the Tübingen school throughout its life.

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[1] E.g., Georges Goyau in his preface to La Pensée chrétienne (Paris: Perrin et cie, 1903).

[2] Jean-Adam Möhler et l'école catholique de Tubingue (1815-1840). Étude sur la théologie romantique en Wurtemberg et les origines germaniques du modernisme (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1913).

[3] E.g., A. Fonck in his article on Möhler for the Dictionnaire de théologie catholique (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1903), 10-2: 2048-2063.

The third area of discussion in historical research on Möhler regards his use of contemporary philosophical symbols as theological means of expression and the extent to which these philosophical symbols determined the theological content. Karl Eschweiler advanced the most sweeping opinion in this area, that Möhler's development is a function of the waxing and waning of the successive influences of Schelling, Schleiermacher, and Hegel.[1]

Each of these three debates produced valuable studies. But each was carried on in the framework of pre-World War II Roman Catholic neo-scholasticism which measured Möhler against a standard of orthodoxy irrelevant to him and his time. The historians then argued for or against his adherence to that standard.

Theological work on Möhler owes its beginnings to members of the Catholic faculty at the university of Tübingen, especially Stefan Lösch[2] and Josef Rupert Geiselmann.[3] More recently, several excellent theological studies of various aspects of Möhler's thought have been produced by Paul-Werner Scheele[1] and Hans Geisser.[2]

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[1] Johann Adam Möhlers Kirchenbegriff. Das Hauptstück der katholischen Auseinandersetzung mit dem deutschen Idealismus (Braunsberg: Herdersche Buchhandlung, 1930).

[2] "J. A. Möhler und die Lehre von der Entwicklung des Dogmas," Theologische Quartalschrift 99 (1917-1918): 25-29, 129-152.

[3] Johann Adam Möhler, die Einheit der Kirche und die Wiedervereinigung der Konfessionen. Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch zwischen den Konfessionen (Vienna: F. Beck (Schöningh und

Of course this heightened theological interest in Möhler and in the other members of the Catholic Tübingen school could only come about through ongoing historical study. Accordingly both Lösch and Geiselmann were careful and productive researchers.[3] The latter has beyond question

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Haindrich), 1940); Die theologische Anthropologie Johann Adam Möhlers. Ihr geschichtlicher Wandel (Freiburg: Herder, 1955); Die katholische Tübinger Schule. Ihre theologische Eigenart (Freiburg: Herder, 1964); Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligter Überlieferung. Der Grundgedanke der Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers und der katholischen Tübinger Schule, 2nd ed. (Freiburg: Herder, 1966).

[1] Einheit und Glaube. Johann Adam Möhlers Lehre von der Einheit der Kirche und ihre Bedeutung für die Glaubensbegründung (Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1964).

[2] Glaubenseinheit und Lehrentwicklung bei Johann Adam Möhler (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1971).

[3] Lösch's careful editing of Johann Adam Möhler. 1: Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe (Munich: F. Beck, 1928) and his notes which served as the basis of the Möhler bibliography published in Georg Schwaiger, ed., Kirche und Theologie im 19.Jahrhundert. Referate und Berichte des Arbeitskreises Katholische Theologie (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975) are a boon to all students of Möhler. His historical investigation also bore fruit in Professor Dr. Adam Gengler 1799-1866. Die Beziehungen des Bamberger Theologen zu J. J. I. von Döllinger und J. A. Möhler. Ein Lebensbild mit Beigabe von 80 bisher unbekannten Briefen darunter 47 neuen Möhler-Briefen. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Gelehrtengeschichte Bambergs im XIX. Jahrhundert (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1963) and Die Anfange der Tübinger Theologischen Quartalschrift (1819-1831). Gedenkgabe zum 100.Todestag Joh. Ad. Möhlers (Rottenburg: Bader, 1938).

been the primary shaper of Möhler-study in this century. His first publication about Möhler was a rebuttal of Eschweiler's thesis that the nineteenth-century Catholic theologian had been radically marked by his Protestant contemporaries.[1] Geiselmann took great pains to demonstrate that all the influences on the young Möhler could be traced to other Catholic writers and that no appeal had to be made to Schelling or Schleiermacher to explain the Tübingen theologian's work. In a time when Roman Catholic scholarship still labored under the shadow of the anti-Modernist reaction it is not surprising that any suspicion of Protestant influence--and of Schleiermacher especially--on one of the few great nineteenth-century Catholic figures and schools not condemned in the later neo-scholastic triumph should at all costs be avoided. Only very gradually, as the dark days of the anti-modernist and then the anti-nouvelle théologie reactions receded into the past, did Geiselmann admit that Schleiermacher had exercised some influence on Möhler and that the Catholic theologian had indeed learned much from his contemporaries outside the Catholic communion.[2]

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[1] "Johann Adam Möhler und die Entwicklung seines Kirchenbegriffs," Theologische Quartalschrift 112 (1931): 1-91.

[2] This growing willingness on Geiselmann's part can be traced in his historical investigations beginning with "Die Glaubenswissenschaft der katholischen Tübinger Schule

Although Geiselmann's contributions to Möhler research must not be undervalued--especially his splendid critical editions of *Die Einheit in der Kirche* and *Symbolik*--and his insistence that Möhler should be read against the background of his Catholic predecessors and contemporaries, e.g., Sailer, Drey, Gengler, Gügler, has proven very sound, nevertheless a movement has arisen since his death in 1971 which might be called revisionist. Several excellent studies have appeared working without Geiselmann's apprehensiveness regarding the frank admission of non-Catholic sources for Möhler's thought and, in some instances, refuting his assumptions, e.g., that there is such a recognizable entity as the Catholic Tübingen "school."[1]

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in ihrer Grundlegung durch Johann Sebastian Drey," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 111 (1930): 49-117, through "Einheit und Liebe. Ihr Gestaltwandel in Möhlers Theologie der Kirche," *Die eine Kirche. Zum Gedenken Johann Adam Möhlers 1838-1938*, ed. H. Tüchle (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1939), pp. 180-209; "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," *Das Konzil von Chalkedon, Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, 3 vols. (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1954), 3:341-420; "Les variations de la définition de l'Église chez Joh. Adam Möhler particulièrement en ce qui concerne les relations entre l'Épiscopat et le Primat," *L'Ecclésiologie au XIXe siècle*, ed. M. Nédoncelle (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1960), pp. 141-195; and "Der Wandel des Kirchenbewusstseins und der Kirchlichkeit in der Theologie J. A. Möhlers," *Sentire Ecclesiam. Das Bewusstsein von der Kirche als gestalltende Kraft der Frömmigkeit*, ed. J. Daniélou and H. Vorgrimler (Freiburg: Herder, 1961), pp. 531-675.

[1] Notable among these recent works are R. J. F. Cornelissen, *Offenbarung und Geschichte. Die Frage der Vermittlung im Überlieferungsverständnis bei Johann Adam Möhler in seiner Frühzeit* (Essen: Ludgerus, 1972); Harald Wagner, *Die Eine Kirche und die vielen Kirchen. Ekklesiologie*

The present study seems opportune for several reasons. First, the time has come when the fact that a Roman Catholic thinker of the nineteenth century was strongly influenced by his Protestant contemporaries, far from calling into question his status as a major theologian, serves only to heighten our interest in him. This is especially so when the Catholic in question is so important a writer as Möhler and the Protestant contemporary is Schleiermacher. Second, presently there exists no lengthy study in English of Möhler's ecclesiological development, the strand of his thought which serves as the link uniting the beginning and end of his career. Third, little attention has been paid in English to the movement of Roman Catholic thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. With a few shining exceptions[1] Catholic

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und Symbolik beim jungen Möhler (Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1977); Joseph Fitzer, Moehler and Baur in Controversy, 1832-38: Romantic Idealist Assessment of the Reformation and Counter-reformation (Tallahassee, Fla.: American Academy of Religion, 1974); Rudolf Reinhardt, "Die Katholish-theologische Fakultät Tübingen im ersten Jahrhundert ihres Bestehens. Faktoren und Phasen der Entwicklung," Tübinger Theologen und ihre Theologie. Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät Tübingen, ed. R. Reinhardt (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1977), pp. 1-42; Philip J. Rosato, "Between Christocentrism and Pneumatocentrism: An Interpretation of Johann Adam Möhler's Ecclesiology," The Heythrop Journal 19 (1978): 46-70; and George B. Gilmore, "J. A. Möhler on Doctrinal Development," The Heythrop Journal 19 (1978): 383-398.

[1] E.g., Gerald A. McCool, Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method (New York: Seabury Press, 1977). The one figure in this period who has received an extraordinary amount of attention from English-speaking students of the history of theology is, of course, John Henry Newman.

theological history from the decline of Jansenism to the Modernist crisis remains unstudied by English-speaking scholars. A study of the central issues in the work of a significant figure may be one small step toward rending the veil which lies over this period. Fourth, ecclesiology has been and remains the characteristic field of study in Catholic thought for the last two hundred years. Indeed, ours has been called the century of the Church. Recently greater attention has been paid to Christology and pneumatology. All the more interest must attach to one whose life's work can be viewed as a shift from a pneumatocentric to a Christocentric doctrine of the Church. Finally, Möhler's thinking about the God-man relationship, the nature-grace problem which Augustine succeeded in placing at the heart of western Christian theology, is the motor which propelled his ecclesiological development. Thus I have watched a fine mind deal creatively with an important question. To have spent time in such observation needs no justification.

CHAPTER I

THE TERMS OF THE PROBLEM

In 1822 Johann Adam Möhler was appointed Privatdozent for Church history in the Catholic theological faculty of the University of Tübingen. During that same year the office of the vicar general of the diocese of Rottenburg censured his philosophical theses published for academic debate because of their rationalist tenor.[1] This did no harm to the new faculty member's reputation, at least among the students. A contemporary later remarked that the students tended to regard this "as a small mark of honor, just as the placing of their professors on the Index was considered to be a great one."[2] Möhler himself some years later offered the semi-serious judgment on this period of his life that it was a time "when he lived as a pagan."[3]

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[1] For the content of these theses, see Geiselmann, Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligter Überlieferung. Der Grundgedanke der Theologie J. A. Möhlers und der katholischen Tübinger Schule, p. 413.

[2] Balthasar Wörner, J. A. Möhler, Ein Lebensbild. Mit Briefen und kleineren Schriften Möhlers, ed. P. Gams (Regensburg, 1866), p. 17.

[3] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:530.

And Johannes Evangelist Kuhn, certainly one of the most distinguished of Möhler's students, wrote of his teacher at this time, "His viewpoints did not completely harmonize with positive faith nor were they in full agreement with ecclesiastical institutions."[1]

The young man--he was not quite twenty-six at his appointment to the Tübingen faculty--did not have a long career before him. Only sixteen years separate those theses which the vicar general of Rottenburg found so objectionable and the last edition of his great Symbolik, whose revision he did not live to complete. How much more astonishing then that the professor whose appointment was somewhat controversial because of views not "in full agreement with ecclesiastical institutions" should be eulogized on his tomb as an ecclesiae decus and fidei defensor. One continuing concern of Möhler's work throughout those sixteen years was in the area of ecclesiology. Here his changing approaches, systems of reference and perspectives can be understood as a development, a process of continuous growth rather than a series of abrupt shifts of emphasis. His ecclesiology, of course, is always a function of larger and more fundamental questions. But it is his constant interest in the nature, work and structure of the Church which uncovers those questions and illuminates the reasons why he answered them differently at one time and another.

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[1] Ibid., 1:528.

The Ecclesiological Remains of the Catholic Aufklärung

Ecclesiology was an area of pressing interest for German Catholics for more than academic reasons during Möhler's brief lifetime. The structures of the Catholic Church in Germany which had endured from the middle of the sixteenth century essentially unchanged had been swept away two years before his birth.

In the decades prior to the French revolution, "the churches and the clergy of Germany were at the peak of human grandeur." This at least was the recollection of Cardinal Pacca who had served as papal nuncio to various Catholic principalities in Germany from 1786 until 1794.

> Two archiepiscopal sees were occupied, one (Cologne) by a brother of the emperor Joseph II, the other (Trier) by the son of the king of Poland, the elector of Saxony. At the heads of all the archiepiscopal churches were prelates descended from the most ancient and illustrious families. Large sections of the lands of Germany--the most beautiful and fertile--belonged to the clergy by right of temporal sovereignty, which extended over several millions of subjects. Thus, within the empire the authority and influence of the clergy were great. In the electoral college three of the eight member electors were ecclesiastical: the archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne. The college of princes was presided over by the archbishop of Salzburg, and all the bishops as well as a large number of abbots cast their votes in the diet.[1]

But Pacca's memoirs are a tale of the fall of the mighty. In 1794 the prince bishops of Cologne, Trier, Mainz,

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[1] Bartolomeo Cardinal Pacca, *Memorie Storiche di Mgr. Bartolomeo Pacca . . . sul di lui soggiorno in Germania dall' anno 1786 al 1794* (Rome, 1832), p. 22.

Speier and Worms lost their lands when French armies occupied the left bank of the Rhine and seven years later these occupied territories were permanently annexed to France. The German secular princes who thus lost lands west of the Rhine were indemnified by being given Church lands on the east bank. Widespread confiscation and secularization of ecclesiastical property followed in which the Roman Catholic Church in Germany lost direct control of 1719 square miles of land with an annual income of twenty-one million guldens and embracing over three million inhabitants.[1] The great archbishoprics had been the keystone of the Catholic Church's organization in Germany and they had now been thoroughly shaken. The material conditions necessary for the continuance of the Church in Germany within the forms and institutions which had structured it for two and a half centuries were swept away. And with those forms went the major support for the ecclesiology which had been their theoretical justification.

That ecclesiology was the German form of Gallicanism which took its name from Justinus Febronius, the pseudonym of Johann Nikolaus von Hontheim, a suffragan bishop of Trier, who had published his views on the proper relations between local ordinaries and the Roman see in 1763.[2] Hontheim's opinions were directly influenced by the episcopalist views of Belgian canonists under whom he had studied at Louvain.[1] But in fact he supplied an underpinning for the practices of the German bishops generally toward papal authority. Papal primacy is one of honor alone, the papal role being that of direction over the whole Church to insure unity and peace. The power of the keys, the basis of true authority in the Church, had been conferred on the whole Church, on all its members by Christ. In practice, however, bishops exercise that authority, especially when united in council. Papal directives must be approved, even if only tacitly, by the Church at large, i.e., they must be accepted by national hierarchies or individual ordinaries. The pope has no right to confirm any bishop in his see or to depose him, to appoint diocesan officials save, of course, in his own diocese of Rome, or to hear appeals or grant requests for dispensations originating outside Rome. Not only did Hontheim advance observations on the limits of papal authority, he also suggested a program by which local ordinaries might prune the

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[1] M. Stigloher, Die Errichtung der päpstlichen Nuntiatur in München und der Emser Congress (Regensburg, 1867), p. 48.

[2] De statu Ecclesiae et legitima potestate Romani Pontificis liber singularis (Bouillon, 1763). The place of

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publication was deliberately falsified; in fact, the book appeared at Frankfurt-am-Main.

[1] His principal teacher had been Zeger van Espen (1646-1728) whose works had been placed on the Index beginning in 1704; see G. Leclerc, Zeger-Bernard van Espen et la hiérarchie ecclésiastique (Rome: Pontificium Athenaeum Salesianum. Facultas juris canonici. Theses ad lauream 59, 1961) and the same author's Zeger-Bernard van Espen (1646-1728) et l'autorité ecclésiastique (Zurich: Pas Verlag, 1964); F. Claeys Bouuaert, "Un canoniste d'Ancien Régime: J. B. Van Espen," Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 38 (1962): 86-102.

prerogatives usurped by the papacy or unjustly attributed to it throughout the centuries. This could be accomplished by the bishop's withholding his placet to papal pronouncements, by the summoning of free local synods, and by cooperation with the secular princes in united action for the good of the local church. Such measures would also prove beneficial for the Church universal, for this limitation of papal pretensions was, according to Hontheim, the only way by which Protestants might be won back to ecclesiastical unity.[1]

The Febronian program had not been carried out. The signal attempt to do so had emerged from a meeting of episcopal representatives at Bad Ems in 1786 to discuss the organization of joint opposition to the creation of a papal nunciature at Munich for Bavaria and the Rhenish Palatinate. This meeting had produced the Punctation of Ems, a statement in twenty-three articles of the suggestions which Hontheim had urged coupled with the request that the emperor summon a national episcopal conference in order to settle once and for all the relationship of the German hierarchy to Rome. In fact, the Punctation met with very little support, for the majority of suffragan bishops feared to exchange the authority of a distant papacy for the increased power of a metropolitan much closer to home.

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[1] For summary, see E. Préclin and E. Jarry, Les luttes doctrinales et politiques aux XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles (1648-1789), Histoire de l'Église depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours 19-2 (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1956), 2:769.

The Febronian critique of the papacy and the program which accompanied it did not disappear without a trace. The restoration following the fall of Napoleon saw the attempt to reinstate the great archbishops to precisely the same ecclesiastical and political positions which they had enjoyed more than twenty years earlier. Such an attempt brought with it a Febronian revival. The center of this revival, which was in fact a prolongation of Aufklärung Catholicism into a new century and a new age, was Constance because of the notoriety surrounding its vicar general, Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg. Because the Wessenberg circle represents both the background for the young Möhler's teaching and the foil for his first attempts to find a new ecclesiological direction, some attention must be paid to it.

In 1795, while studying in Würzburg, the twenty-one year old Wessenberg attracted the attention of Karl Theodor von Dalberg.[1] This remarkable figure had already held important administrative posts in Mainz and Erfurt and was then rector of the University of Würzburg as well as coadjutor of Mainz, Worms and Constance. Eventually, thanks to Napoleon's favor, he was also given the diocese of Regensburg and made a prince-elector, imperial chancellor and primate of Germany. Four years after his meeting with Wessenberg, he became prince archbishop of Constance and summoned the young man who had impressed him, making him his emissary at the conference being held in Bern to redraw the territorial lines of Switzerland within which part of the archdiocese fell. Wessenberg proved so successful in representing Constance's interests that in 1802 Dalberg named him vicar general of the archdiocese.

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[1] For an interesting insight into Dalberg's political and ecclesiastical plans, see Ursmar Engelmann, "Zur deutschen Kirchenfrage auf dem Wiener Kongress," Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft 92 (1972): 373-391.

Enjoying Dalberg's unlimited trust, Wessenberg conscientiously administered the church of Constance along lines which might have served as a model for carrying through the Febronian program. Central to Wessenberg's administration of the archdiocese of Constance was the image of the Church as educator. Thus he set about a thorough upgrading of the intellectual life of the clergy. The seminary curriculum was revised and the academic year reapportioned and lengthened. He oversaw a redrafting of the theses which served as the matter of the examination for those seeking faculties as confessors and made certain that the examinations were carefully scrutinized. He organized conferences for those seeking to be appointed pastors of parishes which amounted to preappointment courses. The number of clergy conferences were increased and attendance was carefully noted. He enormously enlarged the cathedral library, making it available to all the clergy. For those at some distance he undertook the organization of local circulating libraries well stocked with current journals of pastoral and theological importance. He personally selected what he regarded as the best of the papers presented at the various local and cathedral conferences and published them in a monthly journal which grew into the widely influential and greatly respected Archiv für die Pastoralkonferenzen des Bistums Konstanz which ceased publication only with its creator's withdrawal from office in 1827.[1]

All of this attention to clerical education had as its aim the improvement of the religious instruction afforded the laity. The clergy was strictly ordered to preach every Sunday and in addition to offer catechetical instruction. So detailed were the provisions governing this preaching that even the time when the sermon was to be preached was determined by the vicar general--immediately after the reading of the Gospel so as to prevent people from attending Mass without being present at the sermon and to make certain that no priest might celebrate Mass without having to preach. This attention to detail regarding the sermon extended to other liturgical matters as well. For liturgy too should teach. To take advantage of every "teachable moment" Wessenberg provided new German formulae for ceremonies such as the installation of a pastor or the first communion of children. Although he did not himself think that the time was yet ripe for the introduction of Mass in the vernacular (despite the fact that a number of disciples did begin celebrating the Eucharist in German), he encouraged popular vernacular participation in every way possible. German hymns were commissioned, a new prayerbook for the Mass was published in 1812, the scripture readings at Mass were read in the vernacular, vespers were to be celebrated publicly in German.[1]

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[1] Wolfgang Müller, "Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg (1774-1860)," Katholische Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert, ed. Heinrich Fries and Georg Schwaiger (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1975), 1:190f.

This educational program obviously could not take place if the laity were not regularly present within their parish for Sunday worship. Thus anything which distracted or removed them from participation in parochial services, e.g., public services in monasteries and religious houses, pilgrimages, patronal feasts at shrines, etc., was strictly forbidden. Not only was the parishioner tied to his pastor for instruction in the public forum of the pulpit, he was also strenuously urged to confess only to his own pastor since the confessional too was regarded as a platform for instruction.

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[1] Ibid., 1:191f.; see also E. Keller, "Die Konstanzer Liturgiereform unter Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg," Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv, vol. 85 (1965); F. Popp, "Studien zu liturgischen Reformbemühungen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung," Freiburger Diözesan-Archiv, vol. 87 (1967), and the many references to Wessenberg in L. Swidler, Aufklärung Catholicism 1780-1850: Liturgical and Other Reforms in the Catholic Aufklärung, AAR Studies in Religion, vol. 17 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1978).

The local school was also to fall under the pastor's charge. It was his duty to see that the community provided a suitable building and paid the teacher a sufficient salary. In addition the pastor should interview prospective teachers and be able to testify to their qualifications. Wessenberg was instrumental in the opening of an academy for the training of Catholic primary teachers in order to assure a sufficient supply of instructors for his parish schools.

Basic to all these activities is an ecclesiological assumption: that the Church is a school of morality. If moral conduct is the loftiest goal of the human being, then clearly the measure of the worth of a religion is its furtherance of moral conduct. And the very reason for the existence of a Church is that it strengthens precisely those bonds which most encourage ethical living. The state is the most embracing community for furtherance of each citizen's moral growth. For moral growth is nothing other than altruism, the seeking of the good of the other, the basis of the common good. Sin is simply self-seeking. This being so, an institution dedicated to combatting sin and furthering moral action must necessarily be of the highest value to the state. The Church is the best possible school for good citizens. Not only, of course, is living the moral life the fulfillment of human community, it is likewise the performance of God's will and the highest aspiration of each individual. The root of all certainty within the human being is conscience. To live in accord with the demands of conscience is to live altruistically, which means that one's life enjoys a certitude, a directedness, which guarantees its value and meaning. At the same time, living in accord with one's conscience fulfills the will of God who has created the conscience and given it its insistent demand for moral living.[1]

The very certainty of the conscience reveals the uselessness, indeed, the danger of the casuistry of traditional moral theology. One thing only is necessary, the knowledge that truth and virtue both consist in the observance of the "Golden Mean." The consistent refrain is that extremes are to be avoided. Credulity is as much an evil as lack of faith. Balance is all.[2]

Wessenberg's impatience with complicated ethical theories, his moralistic view of the Church's educational mission and his absorption in practical reforms does not mean that he had little regard for theology. But theology for him meant a nonspeculative, biblically oriented, systematic profession of faith. Speculation was to be shunned as a source of division, creating pointless questions about non-essentials. Sharing the _Aufklärung_'s impatience with the middle ages, he regarded scholasticism as the perfect example of everything theology should not be.[1]

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[1] U. Engelmann, "Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg und die Kirche," _Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft_ 91 (1971): 46-69.

[2] Müller, 1:202.

Wessenberg clashed with the Roman curia over his cooperation with the secular authorities on questions of marriages between Catholics and Protestants, on benefices, on liturgical issues, on his participation in a concordat with the government of Lucerne without consultation with Rome or the nuncio. He adroitly avoided an open break through all of these disputes by his contention that Rome was in a state sede impedita because of Pius VII's semi-imprisonment in France and that consequently pressing decisions had to be made by local ordinaries on their own.[2] In 1813 Dalberg, now in a less secure position after Napoleon's defeat because of his own association with the French emperor, was forced to remove Wessenberg as his vicar general. A few months later, however, he named his controversial associate his coadjutor cum spe succedendi. Rome held its peace, even through Wessenberg's attempts at the council of Vienna to create a German primate--his candidate, of course, was Dalberg--around which to build a German Catholic Church relatively independent of the papacy, until Dalberg's death in 1817. The cathedral chapter in Constance immediately elected Wessenberg as vicar, Rome as quickly set this choice aside, and the local government protested in the coadjutor's favor. Wessenberg refused to countenance a schism and himself traveled to Rome, where it became obvious that he was regarded with suspicion as an old-line Febronian of doubtful orthodoxy.[1] Wessenberg continued to act as administrator of the church in Constance with such obvious success and such considerable popular support that even Rome's gambit of suppressing the archdiocese in 1821 failed to dislodge him. Finally he resigned his position in 1827 when Constance was incorporated into Freiburg. He lived out his remaining thirty-three years in an honored and comfortable retirement occupying himself with a biblical-theological handbook, a German ritual for sacramental administration and historical study in conciliarism and Church reform.[2]

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[1] Ibid., 1:196f.

[2] Karl Werner, Geschichte der katholischen Theologie seit dem Trienter Concil bis zur Gegenwart (Munich, 1866), p. 350; see H. Bastgen, "Notizen über Wessenberg aus dem vatikanischen Archiv," Zeitschrift für Schweizer Kirchengeschichte 26 (1932): 241-269.

The combination of his reforming activity which was always in the direction of clarity, e.g., in the liturgy, and simplification, e.g., his centralization of authority in the local ordinary, his uncomplicated moralism, his suspiciousness of speculative theology and his own difficulties with Rome worked together to prevent Wessenberg from ever developing a systematic ecclesiology. If Christianity is the religion of altruism and so corresponds to the loftiest demands of conscience, then Christianity is the religion of all mankind. The Church is the community of persons who are united by their belief in Christ and the principles revealed in his life. Eventually it should become identical with the whole human race since all share in the same insistent call of conscience. Consequently Wessenberg speaks more often of "Christianity" as simply "religion" then he does of "the Church." The Church, as the visible community of those who live in accord with the demands of altruism, has as its primary task the teaching of the doctrine of Christ which is the purest morality. The Church must be holy because its mission is the proclamation of holiness, understood as moral rectitude, a holiness which must be exemplified by those who teach it. The proof that one has true faith and so knows the principles of true moral living is that one lives morally. Faith issues in virtue. The Holy Spirit's presence in the Church guarantees that it will proclaim correctly the teaching of Christ. This teaching is found in scripture. But scripture can easily be misinterpreted unless there is a tradition of teaching which provides the boundaries within which the Bible can be properly construed. Thus scripture must be read within the Church.

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[1] H. Baier, "Wessenbergs Romreise 1817," Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins 79 (1927): 207-235.

[2] K. Aland, "Wessenberg-Studien III: Das Schriftum I. H. von Wessenbergs," Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins 105 (1957): 475-511.

The commission to proclaim the teaching of Christ has been given to all Christians. Indeed, Wessenberg lays great emphasis on the reality of the priesthood of all the faithful. Every Christian is summoned to make an offering of his or her whole life in praise and thanksgiving. This is done by living morally, that is, for others, and can be united with the holiest, because the most moral, of all acts, the self-offering of Christ. This is celebrated in the Eucharist in which the sacrifice of Christ is renewed by the ordained priest, but the self-offering is done by all. Nevertheless, Wessenberg insists that certain persons are especially entrusted with the authority required to lead the Church. The leaders should be especially marked by knowledge, for they are, above everything else, moral teachers. As far as possible, leadership should be exercised collegially. Thus, especially in his later years, the conciliar ideal appeared more and more frequently in his writing. Because love is the supreme moral law, it should be exemplified in the Church's leadership in common council. Love must also be the norm for the exercise of authority in the Church, which is expressed in moral leadership, not coercion. Thus a Church without freedom would not be the Church at all, for it would make impossible true morality which is, by definition, free.[1]

Underlying Wessenberg's ecclesiological views are certain basic assumptions, especially the equation of religion with morality. This was later attacked by Möhler as a fundamental tenet of the Catholic Aufklärung in southwestern Germany.

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[1] Müller, 1:201f.

> Reason itself perceives perfectly clearly that every particular good is good only through the fact that it flows from the original source of all goodness and that any being can remain good only by a constant living bond with the good in itself from which alone moral strength and true life proceed. For this reason the doctrine of grace through Christ Jesus, i.e., that through his merit that bond with God has been regained for us and that we are able to do all things only through him who strengthens us, is a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel and the Church. The more widespread naturalistic and materialistic ideas have become, the more this doctrine has been misrepresented and despised. What was taught under the categories of gratia praeveniens, concomitans, etc., was attacked as scholastic nonsense, as if all good will were not in fact generated in us by the divine Spirit and guided by his assistance to its result. Thus man was severed from God and abandoned to himself; one knew only of nature, no longer of grace.[1]

It is noteworthy that in Möhler's eyes the Pelagian transformation of religion into good works at the cost of the loss of the doctrine of grace is linked with an extreme deism. For God is not denied but simply removed. He is no longer available to man who is thrown back upon himself. In fact Möhler has put his finger on two elements which are undoubtedly major themes in the Aufklärung as it finds expression in Wessenberg's thought. The first is freedom and the second is individualism.[1]

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[1] "Beleuchtung der Denkschrift für die Aufhebung des den katholischen Geistlichen vorgeschriebenen Cölibates. Mit drei Actenstücken," Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze, ed. J. J. I. Döllinger (Regensburg, 1839), 1:183f. The piece first appeared in Katholik 8 (1828): 1-32, 257-297.

No truly moral act can be posited unless the subject is self-motivated. To the degree that the subject acts under external influence or compulsion, to that degree he is not free. If man is to be capable of moral conduct, he must be neither crippled by sin nor dependent on grace. Thus the doctrine of original sin and its effects plays little or no role in Wessenberg's view of man's religious state, and grace is manifested primarily in the example of moral life which Christ has given. Salvation by the death of Christ, however much the language and images employed may be colored by the tradition of vicarious atonement, usually turns out to mean that we have been shown the ultimate altruistic act and so have had our moral strivings clarified and directed toward imitation. The human being is free both from natural forces which govern the physical world and from supernatural influences operating upon the will. He is free from nature and from God.

But he is also free from other human beings. Moral choice is the act of the individual, and since religion is morality, in religion each man stands alone. God has been removed from immediate influence on the individual by the Pelagian moralism which is understood as religion. In doing so he is removed from the working of nature as well. The only point at which God and the world "touch" is creation, which is now divorced from any doctrine of providence. God initiates the universe which then continues on the course set by its immanent laws. So too the individual lives his moral-religious life on the basis of the laws immanent to his conscience.

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[1] There is an interesting and insightful discussion of the *Aufklärung* under precisely these categories in Geiselmann, *Die theologische Anthropologie Johann Adam Möhlers. Ihr geschichtlicher Wandel*, pp. 534-549. But for a very perceptive critique of the treatment accorded the *Aufklärung* by Geiselmann and Catholic authors generally up until twenty years ago, see Wolfgang Philipp, *Das Werden der Aufklärung in theologiegeschichtlicher Sicht* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1957).

This individualism marks the ecclesiology implicit in Wessenberg's writing and his practical program in Constance. The Church was instituted by Christ to proclaim his teaching which is itself the clarification of the moral law contained within the conscience of every human being. The Church continues that teaching in its tradition of preaching and scriptural interpretation. The indwelling of the Spirit within the Church is understood as the guarantee of inerrancy in doctrine, and authority is primarily authority to teach. Thus the point at which the divine activity "touches" the Church is at the moment of institution. Once Christ has delivered his precepts to his disciples, the divine activity in relation to the Church is that of preservation from without, much as the divine activity in relation to the universe is now preservation from without. The universe, the individual, the Church, all operate in accord with internal laws of nature, of conscience, and of polity. As only free individuals can perform moral acts, the Church must be a society of free individuals which encourages both freedom and individuality if its teaching is to have any meaning. The community itself is not moral and cannot therefore be religious. Calling the Church a religious institution means that it is an institution for the encouragement of religion. But only the individual can be religious. Thus the Church, like every other society, must be a collection of individuals. To the extent that it could become anything more, its members must become something less than individuals. The Church is, consequently, an artificial construct, that is, it is a society constituted by the free choice of those who make it up whose founder happens to be divine.[1]

Such a society is marked by clear standards of membership. One can be seen to belong to this institution by profession of belief, by acceptance of doctrine, by observance of law, by obedience to authority and by external moral conduct. This conduct need only be external not because the teaching of Christ does not demand internal adherence, but because it is so internally directed, so concerned with obedience to one's conscience, that its degree of internalization can not be measured. Whether a man is motivated by fidelity to conscience, which is both love of God and self-fulfillment, or is blindly following a still external norm, or is engaged in hypocritical pretense, can be known to none save God and himself. So long as the external result is the same, he is fully a member of the Church.

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[1] Engelmann.

The presuppositions of freedom and individualism underlie both Wessenberg's preoccupation with the Church's role as moral educator in his formation program for the clergy and his liturgical reforms and his political maneuvering toward the creating of a relatively autonomous German Catholic Church under a national primate. These presuppositions were characteristic of the Aufklärung, and many of the practical conclusions which Wessenberg reached from them and tried to put into effect were shared by others within Württemberg and so closer to Tübingen.[1]

One of the most influential of these was Leonhard Werkmeister who as a Benedictine took the name Benedikt Maria.[2] After a career of sowing dissension within his own monastic community through a series of anonymously published tracts, in 1784 he was named court preacher in Stuttgart, the capital of the dukes of Württemberg. His liturgical reforms went further than Wessenberg's were later to do, extending to the celebration of Mass in German as well as all the other sacraments; indeed, he not only translated the rituals but rewrote several, He strongly advocated the dissolution of religious orders and the laicization of monasteries and urged the secular authority to effect these reforms. His ecclesiastical polity was both more radical and more quixotic than the usual Febronian program in that he maintained that each ordinary is absolutely equal to and independent of every other ordinary and that the relationship between them should be that easy and unforced brotherhood enjoyed by the members of the order of Freemasons![1] Although he retired from his preaching office in 1794, he was later appointed in 1807 to the council of Catholic Church affairs of the new kingdom of Württemberg and then after to the royal Church commission. He held this latter post until his death in 1823. Thus he exerted a powerful voice in Württemberg during the first years of the Catholic faculty at Tübingen.

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[1] Paul Kluckhohn, Persönlichkeit und Gemeinschaft (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1925), pp. 25f.; see also Sebastian Merkle, Die kirchliche Aufklärung im katholischen Deutschland (Berlin: K. Curtius, 1910).

[2] Born 1745, died 1823; see Geiselmann's account of his life and writings, Die katholische Tübinger Schule, pp. 592-596. For a thorough if hostile study of Werkmeister and the Aufklärung's effects on the Church in Württemberg, see Johann Baptist Sägmüller, Die kirchliche Aufklärung am Hofe des Herzogs Karl Eugen von Württemberg (1744-1793) (Freiburg: Herder, 1906).

Werkmeister did not live to see the direction which that new theological faculty was to take in the late 1820's and 1830's. But his associate Fridolin Huber did and was horrified.[2] He could only account for such patent wrongheadedness by presuming that some members of the faculty trimmed their opinions to please Rome in the hope of personal advancement.[1] A model of pastoral solicitude for the physical needs of the people he served, Huber was completely committed to realizing the Church's potential as a school of moral development.

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[1] Geiselmann, Die katholische Tübinger Schule, p. 595.

[2] Born 1767, died 1841; ibid., pp. 596-598.

Württemberg was not without its own journal for the preparation of these enlightened ideas within Catholicism similar to the Archiv für die Pastoralkonferenzen in Constance, although much inferior to it both in quality and number of readers. This was the Freimütigen Blätter über Theologie und Kirchentum, the chief contributor to which was Benedikt Alois Pflanz, a school-fellow of Möhler.[2] The chief crusades in which this journal involved itself were the reform and the secularization of the school system and the abolition of clerical celibacy. The latter was urged by Pflanz on the ground that the Church had no right to impose any obligation not contained within the tradition, which was defined in the classical terms of Vincent of Lérins, viz., that believed semper et ubique et ab omnibus. This classic phrase was now interpreted to mean only what is found in scripture and the natural law of conscience.

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[1] Huber was convinced that Möhler was hungry to become a bishop and that Drey was embittered at not having been given a see, ibid., p. 597.

[2] Born 1797, died 1844; ibid., pp. 602-604.

The results of such views of the Church on the intellectual and moral state of most of the local clergy were judged deplorable by Möhler. The opinions he expressed in 1828 specifically about the clergy in Baden he intended to apply to all southwestern Germany, including his own Württemberg.

> It is said that, on the whole (hopefully there are many exceptions), the clergy of Baden are spiritless and unspiritual; that a very material, sensual cast of mind dominates them; that one is seldom aware of a noble enthusiasm for the Gospel, seldom of a deeper, more lively penetration into it. Even if various sorts of expertise are often not lacking, it is added that they are almost always bare of any higher life, unsown with the seeds of the divine, cold and dead.[1]

Möhler admitted that he could not claim to agree on the basis of direct personal knowledge. But if such charges were true, the blame must lie in very large part with the kind of education the clergy had received and the leadership they were given. And knowing what he did of this education and this leadership, the complaints about the clergy could not surprise him.

> Nevertheless, when [the author] considers the negative enlightenment, the one-sided critical development, which has been dominant in Freiburg for nearly half a century, when he recalls, to speak only of a few theological subjects, how dogmatics (with the present instructor of which he is not acquainted) has been presented only by means of historical references and external proofs without any deeper grounding and speculative spirit, how Church history, instead of making the directions of Christ and the workings of the Holy Spirit within it apparent to the hearers, instead of displaying the whole

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze, 1:178.

> course of events within a higher synthesis yet without prejudice to the usual pragmatic perspective, has been treated almost as an histoire scandaleuse and the favorite sport has been to pour scorn on popes, bishops, councils, monks and ecclesiastical institutions, how for a long time the reform movement advanced from the top, among many obvious gains, has still almost exclusively been occupied with mere forms and externals of all sorts, how likewise the writing abilities of the clergy which have been called into service for conferences (so very useful in themselves) have been exhausted in purely liturgical, pastoral and moral case-work but receive no motivation to penetrate to the final and deepest bases of Christian faith and life and feel no inner spontaneous force and no pressure to push on with active vibrant intelligence into the depths and heights, yes, when one knows that whenever something of this sort has wanted to manifest itself, it was bound hand and foot in order to suppress it and was condemned as mysticism and scholasticism, then the statement mentioned regarding a predominant sensual orientation among the clergy of Baden in fact takes on some appearance of truth.[1]

Under circumstances such as these, Möhler asks, how could one expect to nurture "a religious depth and interiority." He challenges whether the clergy could point to any distinguished philosophically or speculatively talented person who would agree that he had received any encouragement or stimulation from them. The talent he means, he goes on to add, is not such as is taken up with "negative and superficial ratiocination" or has all its attention fixed on forms. He intends a religious student whose abilities are dedicated to the fullness of the idea of religion, the substance of faith. And the fostering of such a clergy requires a great deal more than tinkering with the externals or reforming clerical discipline.

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[1] Ibid., 1:178f.

If this is the state of clerical education and formation in 1828 and "for nearly half a century" before, then Möhler is also criticizing the education which he himself received. He had been ordained a priest only nine years earlier. His education too had been in dogmatics taught by recitation of historical references and "external proofs" and in Church history designed to discredit longstanding institutions rather than to understand them. And he too had emerged from such a program of training with a moralistic view of the Church's role, a Febronian episcopalist notion of its structure and a concern with institutional reform "occupied with mere forms and externals of all sorts." This ecclesiological stance, which was not at variance with that of his first colleagues at Tübingen, found expression in his canon law lectures of 1823.

The Catholic Faculty at Tübingen

Württemberg had long been a predominantly Lutheran duchy under Catholic rule. Outside Stuttgart and Ludwigsburg there was only a very sparse Catholic population. But in 1806, with the end of the empire and the reshuffling of the German states, Württemberg became a kingdom and its duke became King Friedrich I. Since 1802 he had been busily and astutely pursuing a policy of territorial growth which had brought him lands formerly belonging to the episcopal states of Constance, Augsburg, Wurzburg, Worms and Speier, which together gave the new kingdom a sizeable Catholic minority, almost a third of the population.[1] By government edict, first in 1803 for the newly annexed lands, then in 1806 for the whole of the newly constituted kingdom, freedom of religion and equality among all Christian confessions were established. This was no light undertaking, for the Lutheran establishment, despite the Catholic dukes, had been and remained enormously influential.[2] To regulate the ecclesiastical affairs of this new Catholic element of the population, a concordat was sought with the papacy. The government wished to have a diocese erected at Ellwangen and had hopes for another later at Rottweil. But these negotiations were abruptly broken off by Napoleon's decision that his Confederation of the Rhine, of which Württemberg was a member state, should have a single concordat. When no general concordat was forthcoming, sporadic attempts were made by Friedrich's government to revive discussion with Rome with the suggestion that, in addition to the new diocese, a Catholic theological faculty be founded at Ellwangen.

After frutiless discussions in 1808, 1809 and 1811, the government took matters into its own hands. In 1812 Friedrich created a vicariate general at Ellwangen subject to the diocese of Augsburg with jurisdiction over all the areas which had formerly belonged to the five dioceses at whose expense the new kingdom had grown. In addition a seminary was founded for the new vicariate also at Ellwangen, for the king deemed it necessary that young theologians study "under the eyes of their bishop."[1] This new school came into existence with a grandiose title--the "Katholische Friedrichslandesuniversität"--and rather meager resources. Five professorships were established: Old Testament studies, New Testament studies, dogmatics, Church history and canon law, and moral and pastoral theology. The entire library for this "university" consisted at its opening of 2655 volumes.[2] This indicates no lack of interest on the part of the government, however, for when compared to other Catholic seminary faculties then being formed or revived elsewhere in Germany, this seems positively lavish.[3] Indeed, the Württemberg government was much concerned with the education of the Catholic clergy. Friedrich's ministers were under no illusions about the popularity of the regime in the newly annexed territories. Confessional differences ran deep on the popular level, and many of the new subjects were acutely aware that their Catholic faith made them a minority group in a traditionally staunchly Lutheran state. It was then of prime importance that these new members of the kingdom be reassured that their Church affiliation did not relegate them to an inferior position. Religious toleration had been guaranteed very quickly following the first annexations, but it then became necessary to demonstrate that the government was committed to it in practice. One important sign of that commitment was the founding of the vicariate and the seminary. Like the continued attempts to obtain Rome's consent to the elevation of the vicariate to a diocese, the seminary and the clergy trained there should serve to detach the Catholic population from their former ecclesiastical superiors who, not long before, had also been their secular lords. Furthermore, a well-educated Catholic clergy could serve the educational needs of the state in the same way as did the Lutheran clergy. Accordingly the seminary at Ellwagen maintained a course, which was subsequently carried over to Tübingen, designed to prepare more talented students for secondary teaching. This, of course, also agreed with the emphasis on the Church as primarily a school of morality.[1]

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[1] A. Knöpfler, J. A. Möhler. Ein Gedankblatt zu dessen hundertstem Geburtstag (Munich, 1896), pp. 6f.

[2] W. Golther, Der Staat und die katholische Kirche im Königreich Württemberg (Stuttgart, 1874), pp. 25-32.

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[1] Reinhardt, p. 8. See throughout, F. X. Funk, Die katholische Landesuniversität in Ellwangen und ihre Verlegung nach Tübingen. Festgabe zum 25. jährigen Regierungsjubiläum Seiner M. des Königs Karl von Württemberg (Tübingen, 1889).

[2] Funk, p. 14.

[3] This is a telling testimony to the plight of Catholic educational institutions which had been destroyed or badly battered in the secularization of Church property and the redrawing of boundaries. See Reinhardt, p. 8.

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[1] Funk, pp. 24f. The preparatory program for future teachers was the *Institut der Lehramtscandidaten* or the *Präparandeninstitut*. On the general scholastic program, see Knöpfler, pp. 7f.

But the fledgling theologate at Ellwangen had problems. The number of students fluctuated throughout the first years due to the wars of independence from France. Balthasar Wörner, a fellow student with Möhler and later his biographer, paints an unhappy picture of the quality of student life at Ellwangen, the young scholars being more attentive to the social rather than the intellectual life.[1] But the greatest difficulty was the location: Ellwangen was simply too removed from the intellectual currents of the day, too sheltered, too limited in the resources which it could offer. This at least was the opinion of the trustees: "Natural science, mathematics, music and drawing are not pursued or taught in Ellwangen, even though many a theological student has a talent for and an interest in them and would find time to engage in one or another of these areas, which subsequently would provide the lonely pastor of souls a very pleasant and worthwhile hobby."[2] More important than the failure to provide enjoyable hobbies, however, it became more and more apparent that theology could not be adequately taught without some philosophical, historical and philological resources near at hand. So when King Friedrich's death and Pius VII's elevation of the vicariate to an independent diocese both occurred in 1816, the opportunity was seized to review the situation.

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[1] Wörner, pp. 4-7. Knöpfler is somewhat less harsh, p. 13.

[2] Quoted in Reinhardt, pp. 8f.

In the following year, on the order of the new king, Wilhelm, and with the advice of his councillors for Catholic affairs who thought that Ellwangen was too Catholic and might breed sectarian narrowness, the diocesan see was transferred to Rottenburg and the theological faculty was joined to the distinguished university of Tübingen.[1]

The theological orientation of the Catholic faculty during the Ellwangen years and the first years at Tübingen was quite different from the directions with which its most famous members were to be associated from the late 1820's. Nor was the faculty fully united within itself. At Ellwangen two groups developed centering about two of the faculty members, Johann Nepomuk Bestlin and Peter Alois Gratz.

Bestlin,[2] who was professor of moral and pastoral theology, had been a favorite student of Johann Michael Sailer at Dillingen and so held a notable place in that growing movement within German Catholicism which was opposed to the somewhat desiccated moralism represented by Wessenberg. Bestlin's biographer, Lorenz Lang, described him, rather surprisingly, as "a mystic of a noble sort" and "the second Heinrich Suso" on the one hand, and "a friend of the true Aufklärung" on the other.[1] This strange combination, mystic and Aufklärer, aptly expresses the position of one who espoused many of the reform positions associated with Febronius in the previous century and with Wessenberg among his contemporaries, and who consequently reflected the organizational concerns of the ecclesiology typical of those others, but who also shared the growing desire for a religion rooted in spirituality rather than morality and so the also growing lack of confidence in the free play of reason as the correct guide in religion. In his early career in the priesthood he had worked for the sorts of practical changes in the Church's structure and liturgy that Fridolin Huber had or that Pflanz would advocate a generation later. But he became increasingly concerned about governmental interference in questions which to him were clearly ecclesiastical only.[2] Linked closely with Bestlin on the Ellwangen faculty was Karl Wachter, the professor of Church history and canon law.[3]

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[1] Funk, pp. 19-23, and Knöpfler, pp. 16-17.

[2] Born 1768, died 1831.

The central figure of the other party in the school was Gratz, professor of New Testament studies.[4] Gratz too had been a student of Sailer's at Dillingen. He was not unlike Bestlin also in that he is not simply categorized but, in contrast to his colleague in moral and pastoral theology, he certainly cannot be termed a mystic. His own ecclesiological position can be seen beneath his observations on the Church in Germany in his time. The decisive event which shaped that Church was the secularization of vast amounts of ecclesiastical property and the consequent institutional disruption. The secularization was not in itself a bad thing. For example, the breaking up of the great archiepiscopal principalities may well have served the Church's interests in the long run. It is not healthy for the Church of Christ to have a superabundance of material resources, and it is right that what the Church does not need should be given over to the state for the common good. But this presumes that the Church will retain what it needs in order to function, which in many instances was not the case in the appropriation of ecclesiastical property. Thus, the Church now finds itself dependent upon the good will and generosity of secular princes to dole out what was once its own goods. The clergy have become state employees because they are dependent upon the government for their salaries. What is worst of all is that the resources which have been secularized have been used neither for the common good nor for the adequate support of the Church. Thus the state has not really benefited and the Church has certainly suffered.[1]

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[1] Quoted in Josef Rief, "Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853)," Katholische Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert, 2:11.

[2] Lang quoted ibid, 2:12.

[3] Born 1764, died 1822.

[4] Born 1769, died 1849.

Gratz then raises no objections against the state's intervention in the life of the Church so long as that is confined to such issues as the amount and administration of property and does not extend to doctrinal issues. In fact, he seems willing to applaud such intervention if it accomplishes needed reforms in ecclesiastical life. Nevertheless, the willingness to employ secular power for internal Church reform is balanced by a genuine alarm at the reduction of the Church to an arm of government. Most revealing, however, is his final reason for protesting against the secular authorities' lack of care for the religious needs of their subjects: the episcopal sees of Germany are almost all vacant and the authorities seem perfectly content to leave them so. "The pope is now practically the Episcopus universalis of Germany. At the summit of the spiritual administrations stand only Vicarii Apostolici. So long as Germany has been Christian, this is an unheard of situation."[2] Something of the episcopalist strain of the previous century can be heard here. Wessenberg would well have understood and thoroughly shared the alarm which Gratz registers at the prospect of the pope as universal bishop in Germany. What is remarkably is that, after addressing the rapaciousness of the secular princes and their indifference toward the Church's needs, Gratz's cause for fear is that the Church in Germany is laid open not to the German princes but to the pope.

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[1] "Dermalige Lage der deutschen katholischen Kirche," Theologische Quartalschrift 1 (1819): 94.

[2] Ibid.

Beyond the particular points of the Ellwangen New Testament exegete's evaluation of the state of the Church is the type of concern which he registers. In this evaluation the grave problems and far-reaching disorganization which the Catholic community faces are traced solely to institutional difficulties. There is no discussion of lack of depth or relevance in spirituality, of inadequate theology, of an insufficiently appreciated or appropriated tradition; rather, all problems are seen as finally issues of organization, administration and finance. This is either a concern for practical management and reform without any accompanying and supporting ecclesiology or an ecclesiology which sees the Church simply as an organization and therefore knows of nothing but management and practical reform.

At Ellwangen the professor of dogmatics, Johann Sebastian Drey,[1] was linked with the circle around Gratz. Although he had been a curate in Röhlingen for a year with Bestlin as pastor, Drey was in agreement with Gratz and his friends about an important question in opposition to his one-time pastor: the continuance of the faculty at Ellwangen. Drey was convinced that a move of some sort was necessary for the faculty's development, preferably to Tübingen. Bestlin had been able to shape the program of studies in Ellwangen and had no desire to see it rearranged in accord with Tübingen's program. This difference on educational policy explains Drey's adherence to that wing of the school led by Gratz, a fact otherwise surprising, for the professor of dogmatics had already shown himself to stand much closer to the new currents connected with Sailer and represented by Bestlin than to the *Aufklärung* tradition of Wessenberg.

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[1] Born 1777, died 1853.

In 1812 Drey had published an article in Wessenberg's *Archiv für die Pastoralkonferenzen* which ran so counter to that journal's usual position that two critical rejoinders were appended to it.[1] Drey maintained that a thorough rethinking of the teaching and the doing of theology was necessary within Catholicism, a new approach quite removed from the brittle productions of the *Aufklärung*. Such a renewal of theology was necessary for the life of the Church in that it must have a profound effect on priests who, whether they know it or not, always act on the basis of some sort of theological principles which emerge from their understanding of religion. Thus at the very outset of this 1812 article,

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[1] "Revision des gegenwärtigen Zustandes der Theologie," *Archiv für die Pastoralkonferenzen des Bistums Konstanz* 1 (1812): 3-26; reprinted in J. R. Geiselmann, ed., *Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus. Ausgewählte Schriften katholischer Theologie im Zeitalter des deutschen Idealismus und der Romantik* (Mainz: R. Oldenbourg, 1940), pp. 85-97.

Drey enunciates a principle which had far-reaching effects in the meaning of tradition and in ecclesiology and which ran in opposition to the reigning rationalism of the previous generation, viz., theology is the systematic expression in self-conscious terms of what lies at the very heart of religious living, an expression which clarifies religious experience and thus furthers it.

To illustrate what was wrong with the arid theology taught by many of his contemporaries, Drey invited a comparison with the theology of the middle ages. This latter had been the product, according to Drey, of a culture marked by the interpenetration of religion and life. Christianity had then been a given, a positive fact not merely of an earlier age but one presently experienced. It was not the end result of a process of reasoning. The notion that medieval theology is a series of complex word-games spun out into endless hair-splitting distinctions is a caricature popularized by those who do not truly understand theology. For every theology, every philosophy is a word-game. But "every word-game must be judged by the standards of its age . . . and if this is done, then certainly it will always still appear a game, but a game which has the seriousness of life."[1] Experience, not reason, grounds religion. It is a matter of *Gemüt*, not *Verstand*. Scholastic theology had really been formed in a mystical and contemplative spirit, contrary to the image which the eighteenth century had promulgated; it was "the impress of [the scholastics'] spiritual feeling."[1] This great medieval synthesis of life and religion, of Verstand in service of Gemüt, fell apart because of the divorce of reason and life. The attempt was made to erect philosophy independent of theology and, in reaction, theologians tried to build on the foundation of a purely intellectual process, Verstand. But such an intellectual process cannot grasp experience and consequently the appreciation of the Church as a community united on the basis of a common experience dimmed until it has virtually disappeared by Drey's own day. No longer could tradition, the concrete living reality of the community, serve as the norm for theology. Rather, the norm has become the institutionalized authority expressed by one individual, the pope. The Reformers rejected this authority but appreciated even less than their contemporaries who remained Catholic the importance of the living community and so made individual experience and understanding the norm. In an attempt to balance this extreme subjectivity, scripture was made the concomitant objective element in Christianity. Thus, the living tradition of the community, which preserves the past while transforming it to meet the present, was replaced by the dead letter. To avoid wandering off into more and more fantastic subjective views, theologians had had to concentrate on the only objective grounding left to them, scripture. And so theology came to nothing more than grammar or philology. This dry erudition has made salvation history into a series of discrete events which can be explained either by the supernaturalist appeal to the will of God or by purely contingent causes, rather than the magnificent organic unfolding of a positive, spiritually enlivening reality across history. The lifeless analyses of discursive reason (Verstand) have overcome the living insights of intuitive reason (Vernunft) and the concrete data of history.

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

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[1] Ibid., p. 9.

Protestantism has led the way in this distructive process, but Catholic theologians have all too happily followed suit with very few, however notable, exceptions, e.g., Pascal and Fénelon. The only difference has been that, whereas Protestants have confined themselves to the dead letter of scripture, Catholics have added the equally dead letters of the Fathers and the councils. Tradition now means only the inherited weight of decisions and decrees. This does not mean that tradition is dead, Drey hastens to point out, for, if it were, there would be no life left in the Church at all. Christianity would be a thing of the past. No, tradition lives but, unfortunately, apart from theology. The task is to bring theology back to this vitalizing source.

This article appeared in the year Drey began teaching at Ellwangen and is fairly brimming with ideas which are only briefly mentioned or barely sketched and which await subsequent development: theology as a self-reflective bringing to consciousness of a given spiritual vitality, the community of the Church as the embodiment of that vital force, tradition understood as the living and expanding root of Christian life, history as not merely providing a perspective from which to appreciate another's position but as itself being revelatory of religious life, the Reformation as the origin of the triumph of subjectivity, the inevitable collapse of a doctrine of _sola scriptura_ into pedantry. In close combination, Drey gives the reader reminiscences of Sailer's _Erlebnistheologie_, Novalis's "Die Christenheit oder Europa" with its idealized vision of the integrated culture of the middle ages, Schelling's organicism and _wissenschaftlich_ method and Schleiermacher's _Bewusstseinstheologie_. No wonder that Wessenberg's journal for the enlightenment of the clergy of Constance thought that the article needed prompt rebuttal or, at least, searching commentary.

But there was another side of Drey's thought at this time in his career, with which Wessenberg would have been much happier. While attacked by some as inclined to mysticism[1] (later his student Möhler would write of those who link "scholasticism" and "mysticism" to assault anyone pro-posing "to penetrate the final and deepest bases" of Christianity[1]), Drey was also engaged in his Ellwangen years in historical scholarship the results of which might, at least on the surface, have appeared more in harmony with the ecclesiology which the critics of his 1812 overview of the state of Catholic theology espoused. Three years after that article and the beginning of his teaching career at Ellwangen, Drey published an investigation into the origin of private confession within the penitential discipline of the Church[2] and concluded that the practice was not only not of dominical institution as the Council of Trent had taught but was not even of apostolic institution. On the face of it, this seemed precisely the sort of historical critique of existing ecclesiastical institutions in order to bring about their reform or abolishment which Wessenberg would applaud or which Werkmeister might produce. And, in fact, a great storm of disapproval did break about it in Rome.[3] But both those who welcomed Drey's historical investigation and those who deplored it missed a significant point: Drey's transcendence of the debate about institution in his greatly enriched understanding of tradition. Regarding private confession he wrote in his notebook that "even if it can not be demonstrated as immediate apostolic traditon, it has nevertheless arisen from another demonstrable apostolic tradition--ecclesial penance--through that natural process of causation which the Holy Spirit uses as the preparation for development of new dogmas."[1] Drey's historical work is his attempt to be fully faithful to the objective element in theology of which he had written in 1812, an element which is not what he had termed the dead letter of the Fathers and the councils but rather an unfolding tradition, a "natural process of causation," as he wrote in his notes, which is the instrument of the Spirit.

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[1] Rief, 2:12f.

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze, 1:179.

[2] Dissertatio historico-theologica originem et vicissitudinem exomologeseos ecclesia catholica ex documentis ecclesiasticis illustrans (Ellwangen, 1815).

[3] Rief, 2:13.

Thus his conclusions might seem to be part of the broad Febronian program while in fact being directed to and by something very different. Yet there are definitely elements, usually connected with practical issues of policy, which fit the ecclesiology ruling Wessenberg's program for the dioceses of Constance or undergirding the activities of Huber or Werkmeister closer at hand. It is as if Drey had not yet worked out the practical consequences of his theological stance for ecclesiology.

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[1] Quoted in Geiselmann, Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus, p. 183. Drey's Tagebücher remain unedited and unpublished. The largest group of selections published from them are found in this very useful collection by Geiselmann, pp. 101-192.

This is apparent in his letter to Bishop Keller, the vicar general for Württemberg, in 1821 regarding the policies of the Theologische Quartalschrift. Two years after moving to Tübingen, Drey, Gratz, and Johann Baptist Hirscher,[1] who had replaced Bestlin as professor of moral and pastoral theology, founded the journal. Its goal and scope had been clearly stated and included "materials for the history and evaluation of recent Church affairs." The editors informed their readers: "Balanced comments on official decisions as well as on unofficial proposals of this sort lie within the nature of a critical publication and within the needs of the time. Accordingly we shall not refrain from them."[2] One of the issues on which "balanced comments" for "evaluation" appeared was mandatory celibacy for the clergy. Hirscher published a lengthy review of two recent works on the question in which he strongly supported the abolition of the requirement.[3] When Bishop Keller protested both in an open letter and privately to Drey, the latter, because during these first years of the journal's existence all articles and reviews were published anonymously, had to undertake the defense.[1]

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[1] Born 1788, died 1865.

[2] Lösch, Die Anfänge der Tübinger Theologischen Quartalschrift (1819-1831), p. 16.

[3] Theologische Quartalschrift 2 (1820): 637-670.

First, he made it clear that he agreed with the positions espoused in the review.

> Celibacy in the Catholic Church is a disciplinary matter. Its history demonstrates that from the beginning opinions about it were as varied as was the willingness to have this law imposed. With regard to our own time it should be acknowledged as certain that this law has the opinion of the majority of the clergy against it as their general trend. No one can know this better than we who have had the opportunity for the last five years of observing the candidates for the clerical state in all their unexpressed dispositions and stated ideas.[2]

But beyond the opinions expressed in the review, Drey defends the right of the Quartalschrift to publish critical comments on Church laws, practices and institutions. He reminds Keller of the goals expressed by the editors at the journal's inception, goals both "scientific and Catholic." This requires the journal to point to many laws and practices which may once have served a useful function but which are now anachronistic or actually detrimental, to urge the complete repudiation of some of these and to try to correct others. This requirement is not something assumed by the editors as a result of their duties as publishers of a theological journal, but as theologians who must confront the needs of people at the present, the integrity of their own scholarly disciplines and the good of the Church itself "freed from forms which have become useless and alien accretions."[1] This task of criticism is something imposed upon those who love the Church, and it is in that spirit that comments such as those to which Keller objects have been made. This is not, Drey very carefully informs the vicar general, part of that "widely popular, rash and boisterous desire for reform" whose advocates have no reason to love the Theologische Quartalschrift and whose support the editors of the journal have no desire to curry.[2] But Drey claims for the editors and the authors they publish the right to speak freely about all aspects of the Church's life and, if he has spoken ill-advisedly or on the basis of inadequate information or faulty reasoning, to be freely criticized by other theologians, so long as critical comments do not descend to the level of the personal in violation of Christian love. This right the Church must guarantee theologians for its own welfare, especially in a day when the usual means for correcting abuses used in past ages are so noticeably lacking: free general synods.[1] The history of the Church clearly demonstrates that episcopal councils are the best means for correcting abuses within the Church, but it is also unfortunately perfectly clear that there is no great likelihood of such free councils being summoned in the present situation, especially in Germany. The duty to indicate such abuses and to suggest remedies for them has consequently passed to the free theologian. Theologians have this duty by default because of their vocation as scholars and because they are free to do so, unlike those engaged in direct service to the Church as administrators, etc. It is this duty which the author of the review to which Keller has objected attempted to fulfill and it is in defense of that attempt that Drey, in the name of the other editors, now writes.[2]

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[1] For the demonstration that Hirscher was indeed the anonymous reviewer in this instance, see Lösch, Die Anfänge der Tübinger Theologischen Quartalschrift, p. 66. For an excellent recent study of the exchange between Keller and Drey as well as the full texts of the various documents, see Rudolf Reinhardt, "Neue Quellen zu Leben und Werk von Johann Sebastian Drey. Dreys Antwort auf das 'Pastoralschreiben' des Rottenburger Generalvikars vom Jahre 1821,' in Reinhardt, Tübinger Theologen und ihre Theologie, pp. 117-166.

[2] Letter of the Editor of the Theologische Quartalschrift to Vicar general Keller, May 8, 1821, in Reinhardt, "Neue Quellen zu Leben und Werk von J. S. Drey," p. 158. Further proof that Drey truly stated his own opinion and was not merely supporting Hirscher is found in the fact that the two professors asked the aid of Wilhelm I of Württemberg in abolishing the celibacy requirement in the course of an interview with the king dating from this period. The king decided that he could not risk the break with Rome; see Lösch, Prof. Dr. Adam Gengler 1799-1866, pp. 248f.

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[1] Reinhardt, "Neue Quellen zu Leben und Werk von J. S. Drey," pp. 155f.

[2] Ibid., p. 156.

Clearly the episcopalist view of Church polity which underlies the defense of the role of theological scholarly freedom is very much in accord with the views advanced half a century before by Hontheim or, with some adaptations, by

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[1] Ibid., p. 157.

[2] Ibid., pp. 157f.

Wessenberg in Drey's own day. It is coupled with a quiet despair regarding the success of such a polity being realized within the Church, however, which is unlike anything in either the one-time auxiliary of Trier or the then vicar general of Constance. There is the interesting implication that Church structure can change to suit the needs of the day, that once the episcopalist conciliar system may have been best and that it might even be the most desirable at present, but that, if it cannot be effected, something else must and will substitute. That sort of adaptation and growth within ecclesiastical polity is a notion foreign to the classical episcopalism of the Aufklärung.

But Drey's description of the theological scholar is also noteworthy. The theologian is "free" according to the dogmatician of Tübingen because he is not in service to the Church in the same way as an administrator or a pastor is. In some measure he stands outside the ecclesiastical structure and so is able to view it as a whole and therefore be impartial in his evaluation of its organization and functioning. This kind of objectivity, that of the detached observer, is guaranteed by the theologian's financial and professional independence of the Church.[1] But, in view of the incipient organic understanding of the Church in his 1812 article on the condition of Catholic theology and the theological method outlined in his 1819 introduction to theological studies[1] which demanded that the theologian be fully immersed in the life of the ecclesial community if his observations are to have any validity, one must conclude that in 1821 Drey had still not incorporated the historical Church organization into his organic ecclesiology, that he had not succeeded in reconciling the ideal construction of the Church with the historically conditioned structure.

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[1] Reinhardt suggests that Drey's long delay in responding to a call to the chair of dogmatics at the university of Freiburg at this time was prompted by the possibility that the Catholic faculty at Tübingen would have been transferred once again, now to be joined to the seminary faculty at Rottenburg. Such an event would have made him directly

Hirscher's opinion of mandatory celibacy for the clergy did not change. Ten years after Drey's defense of his review to Bishop Keller, Hirscher published similar ideas in the Theologische Quartalschrift.[2] This time, however, the editors of the journal were not united in support of their colleague. One of them, in order to dissociate himself from the opinions expressed, insisted that the policy of anonymous publication cease. The editor whose success in

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dependent on the Church for support and so, in the terms of his letter to Keller, would have cost him his freedom as a theologian. Only when plans for this transferral fell through did he decline the invitation to Freiburg; Reinhardt, "Neue Quellen zu Leben und Werk von J. S. Drey," p. 128.

[1] Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie mit Rücksicht auf den wissenschaftlichen Standpunkt und das katholische System (Tübingen, 1819).

[2] Hirscher's review of "Über die Bildung eines Vereines für die kirchliche Aufhebung des Zölibatsgesetzes. Von einem katholischen Geistlichen in Württemberg" (Ulm, 1832), in Theologische Quartalschrift 13 (1831): 371-385.

changing the policies of the Quartalschrift reflected the shift of theological opinion within the Catholic faculty at Tübingen was Johann Adam Möhler.[1]

Möhler's Early Career

But in 1822, the year after Drey's exchange with Keller, when Möhler first arrived on the Tübingen faculty, his full agreement with Hirscher could have been confidently anticipated.

Möhler had been born on May 6, 1796, the eldest son of the innkeeper and baker of the small town of Igersheim. He entered the Latin school in nearby Mergentheim at the age of twelve, shortly after his mother's death. His father, although not unaware or unsympathetic to his son's gifts, made heavy demands on him for assistance in the family business, and it is from this time that the precarious health manifested itself which afflicted Möhler throughout his life. In 1813, the young man arrived in Ellwangen with an indifferent education from Mergentheim and began his philosophical studies at the lyceum. Two years later he entered upon theological study with the three-year old faculty of the Landesuniversität.

Over four decades later, Balthasar Wörner described the education given to theology students at Ellwangen as

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[1] Lösch, Die Anfänge der Tübinger Theologischen Quartlashrift, pp. 121f.

"scarcely theological and even less religious."[1] This is the verdict of a later ultramontane time on a faculty caught between the Aufklärung and the new age being born. It is true that the tendencies of some of the faculty and students, for example the group headed by Gratz, were reinforced by the manuals which were used as textbooks. All the manuals in use at Ellwangen when Möhler began his course of theology had been written between 1788 and 1805 and were deeply imbued with the previous generation's deductive theology, rationalist scriptural exegesis and Febronian-Josephinist ecclesiology and canon law.[2]

During his years at Ellwangen Möhler seems to have passed through a personal crisis. For a time he intended to abandon his goal of ordination to the priesthood and to take up law. His hesitations were compounded by the family difficulties which he had faced for some years: his father's grudging acceptance of his choice of the priesthood and the financial difficulties which he could do nothing to alleviate.[3]

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[1] Wörner, p. 5. These recollections have been attacked as unjust; see Sebastian Merkle, "Möhler," Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft 58 (1938): 250-258.

[2] Knöpfler, pp. 9f.; a complete list of Möhler's textbooks is given.

[3] H. Kihn, Prof. Dr. J. A. Möhler; Ein Lebensbild als Beitrag zur Geschichte der Theologie der Neuzeit. Festrede zur Feier des 303. Stiftungstages der Königl. J. M. Universität, gehalten am 2. Januar 1885 (Würzburg, 1885), p. 5; also, Knöpfler, pp. 15f.

He did continue his studies in theology, however, when the faculty moved to Tübingen in 1817. There, along with his fellow students, he was caught up in the friendly society of the students of the Protestant theology faculty. Later Wörner claimed that both groups could unite in friendship because both discounted confessional differences and were at one in their rationalist background.[1]

The following autumn Möhler left Tübingen and entered the major seminary at Rottenburg. A year later, on September 18, 1819, he was ordained a priest. He spent the next year in parochial ministry. His conduct and the pastoral care which he gave to his parish were by general admission beyond reproach, and he gained admiration for "his loving, modest and indeed, in retrospect, very worthy conduct, together with the devout seriousness of all his actions."[2] But the dean of his locale subsequently noted that "his intellectual life at that time still did not have its later direction."[3] Perhaps the wisest observation was that of a neighboring pastor: "So learned a young gentleman ought to believe a little differently than we older folks; later on he will soon enough come around."[4] During this year also, Möhler happened to meet the elderly Sailer who remarked that the young priest inspired him with high hopes for the future.[1]

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[1] Wörner, p. 8.

[2] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:24.

[3] Ibid., 1:25.

[4] Ibid.

By the end of 1820, Möhler had been picked out to be a teacher at the Gymnasium and was back in Tübingen to prepare for this new position. His training to this point had been geared more to produce a classical philologist than a theologian. In Württemberg at this time a strong background in Latin was the prerequisite for any field within the humanities, and Möhler had been given such a background. In addition he was very well grounded in Greek. As late as 1822 he was still considering devoting himself to classical philology and was willing to accept a teaching position in classics.[2] But this knowledge of classics might also be very useful in Church history.

When the Catholic faculty moved from Ellwangen to Tübingen in 1817, two of the five professors declined to continue: Bestlin and Karl Wachter, both of whom had opposed the move since its first suggestion. Bestlin was soon replaced by Hirscher in moral and pastoral theology. Wachter, however, who had taught Church history and canon law, proved more difficult to replace. Georg Leonhard Dresch,[3] the chief librarian, filled in for the next several years. Although Dresch had considerable training as a historian, this was clearly an unsatisfactory make-shift solution. When Dresch departed for Landshut in 1822, Johann Georg Herbst,[1] the professor of Old Testament studies, lectured in Church history. Early in 1821 Möhler had been appointed Repetent in Church history. With Herbst eager to be rid of his duties in a field not his own and Dresch gone, the young man (he was not quite twenty-six) was named Privatdozent for Church history. The appointment was made subject to three conditions: Möhler was not to regard it as a permanent position entitling him to tenure, nor was it to entail a definite salary, and he was to undertake a journey of visitation to the major German theological faculties, primarily though not exclusively Catholic, before assuming his academic duties.

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[1] Ibid., 1:24.

[2] F. X. Reithmayer, "Lebenskizze J. A. Möhlers," included in the fifth edition of Symbolik (Mainz, 1838), reproduced in J. R. Geiselmann's critical edition (Cologne: Jacob Hegner, 1960), 2:124.

[3] Born 1786, died 1836.

In seven months Möhler traveled to Würzburg, Göttingen, Braunschweig, Magdeburg and Berlin and then, turning south again, to Breslau, Prague, Vienna, Munich and back to Tübingen. The Protestant faculties which Möhler visited on this theological grand tour seem to have created a greater and more lasting impression on him than did the Catholic. In Göttingen he met the Lutheran Church historian Gottlieb Jakob Planck.[2] This already patriarchal figure (he had begun his career at

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[1] Born 1777, died 1836.

[2] Born 1751, died 1833.

Göttingen twenty-two years before Möhler's birth) impressed the young Catholic by the breadth of his erudition but more importantly by the range which he gave to the study of Church history. Every aspect of ecclesiastical life--art, architecture, liturgical practice and texts, organization, preaching, as well as doctrinal pronouncements, official statements and theological writing--was called upon in elucidation of the content of faith and its development. Every aspect of the Church's life was shown to bear on every other aspect. "Such vast scholarship," Möhler wrote of Planck while at Göttingen,

> such excellent discrimination of significant material, such wonderful synthesis and organization of the data combined with such pragmatic development, frequently left me awestruck and imbued me with a peculiar sense of urgency. These lectures revealed to me what it means to do Church history well. I regard that as a great gain.[1]

He was pleased to find that the distinguished Lutheran historian regarded Catholic doctrine and theology as "significant material" and treated them respectfully. This suggested to the young Catholic the need for knowledge of other confessions. Only by a deep and sympathetic awareness of other communions and their theologies could one come to the recognition of the full Christian reality.

> For twenty years there has been little or no debate. This seems to have been the result of indifferentism.

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[1] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:74.

> Thus I must regard the rekindled rivalry between Catholics and Protestants as the result of reawakened religious life. But with those from whom we differ in doctrine and before whom, since that difference must be based on conviction, we defend that doctrine, we should, on the level of life, come together in love. This seems to me conduct worthy of the Christian. That Protestantism should rouse itself is a step toward Catholicism, for it is a movement away from indifferentism; that Catholicism should respond is a step toward Protestantism, a movement away from spiritual decline and religious and ecclesiastical petrification. If only the two antagonists speak to one another again--even if the dialogue prove nothing more than mutual recrimination for injuries supposedly suffered--even that is a beautiful step toward harmony. But if we can remember this, that the goal is mutual accord and unrestrained reconciliation, then the charges will disappear and slanders be discontinued. For who could choose and employ insult as a means to peace and imagine that truth is the result of lies?[1]

The impulse which led Möhler a few years later to inaugurate his lectures on symbolics at Tübingen finds its first expression in this letter written from Göttingen. But it is noteworthy that the student of Drey also believed even at the outset of his career that theology is the reflex of religious experience. Before theological differences can be reconciled unity must be achieved "on the level of life." Only when the experience of love is shared, where there is common life, can the conscious expression of that life be universally agreed upon.

But it was Berlin, which he approached "not without a certain anxiety,"[2] that proved to be the climax of Möhler's tour. His awe is understandable. Even allowing for the luster added by the intervening century and a half, a theology faculty which boasted Schleiermacher, Marheineke and Neander while Hegel lectured in philosophy must appear formidable. Although Schleiermacher became a major influence in Möhler's development both positively and negatively, and Marheineke receives laudatory mention in Symbolik, it was Johann August Neander[1] who most impressed the young Württemberger during the three weeks he spent in Berlin. He admired the older man personally and as a scholar.

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[1] Ibid., 1:72f.

[2] Ibid., 1:82.

> Here knowledge appears in its very essence: it embraces thought and life. I admired Planck, but what is Planck to Neander? Planck plays upon the surface; Neander grasps everything in the most profound depths. What research into sources, what judgment, what profound religious sensitivity, what seriousness, what clarity and precision in presentation! How vibrant, how luminous is the portrait of an age that Neander paints! With what mastery he knows how to depict men who were the leading spirits of their time and with what unstinting justice he renders to each his due! He towers above Planck. Neander's lectures will remain unforgettable for me; they will have a critical influence on my work in Church history. His personal life also is permeated with glowing religious feeling.[2]

This exuberant estimate of Neander was prompted by Möhler's discovery in him of an element which had seemed still lacking in Planck. The Göttingen historian marshalled data from every aspect of the Church's existence in reconstructing its history. But he missed the great question: why should every element in the Church be important in the attempt to understand the whole? Neander, on the other hand, saw the point: one must study every aspect of the whole because it is a whole. This was what struck Möhler as a revelation, and it was this that made it seem in retrospect that Planck still dealt only with the surface while Neander peered into the depths. The former recognized that one must examine every aspect of the phenomenon if one is to do it justice; the latter recognized that the unity of these aspects viewed externally is rooted in an internal unity and that the historian must penetrate to that unity. Some years later Neander wrote:

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[1] Born 1789, died 1850.

[2] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:84.

> Christianity we recognize as a force not born from the hidden depths of human nature but originating from heaven in that the latter has opened itself to mankind who had been estranged from it, a force both in its origin and in its essence exalted above everything which human nature may fashion from its own resources, a force which should impart new life to it and reconstruct it from its innermost being out.[1]

Christianity is not, then a doctrinal system, a moral teaching, a mode of worship, but a "force" which comes to human nature from outside itself, which roots within it and fashions humanity in accord with itself. The history of the Church is the history of this force, this life-principle unfolding itself and working its re-creative effects. Möhler is quite right when he writes of Neander's "profound religious sensitivity" in his lectures and the "glowing religious feeling" which permeates his personal life. For Neander's historical writings seek the essence of Christianity and that essence, since it is a life-force which finds no final and complete incarnation in any form or institution, must finally be located in its clearest and purest presence in those who are most open to the experience of it. This receptivity to the force of Christianity becomes the norm of Church history. Neander provides the Church history which must follow from Schleiermacher's *Bewusstseinstheologie* just as the great Berlin theologian's own *Glaubenslehre* is the systematics which must follow from it.[1]

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[1] Introduction to the second edition of his Kirchengeschichte, quoted in F. C. Baur, Die Epochen der kirchlichen Geschichtschreibung (Tübingen, 1852), p. 209.

When Möhler left Göttingen in November 1822, with Planck before him as a model of careful research and painstaking detail in history, he wrote to his uncle of plans which he was beginning to sketch for a history of the introduction of Christianity into southwestern Germany, the area of Württemberg.[2] When he first arrived in Berlin he discussed with Neander the possibility of a study of the Avignon papacy and the councils of Constance and Basel-Florence.[1] This latter project is indicative of Möhler's ecclesiological thinking at the beginning of his academic career. Within the Febronian tradition great importance was attached to the councils of the early fifteenth century because of the conciliar theories which underlay them. They were frequently cited in support of an episcopalist structuring of the Church. Wessenberg, for example, occupied himself in his retirement with just such an historical study as the young Möhler proposed.[2] At Tübingen itself Drey had written in his reply to Bishop Keller a year and a half before that free councils, i.e., independent of papal control, were the best hope for the reform which the Church at large and especially in Germany needed, although he had no realistic expectations that such councils would be summoned, and he too had appealed to the example of history in support of his contention.

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[1] Neander said of his colleague the day after Schleiermacher's death, "From him a new period in the history of the Church will one day take its origin": quoted in Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973), p. 425.

[2] Lösch, *Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe*, 1:76.

But by the end of his three weeks in Berlin, Möhler seems to have abandoned both his earlier plans. Neander had directed his attention to the Fathers. As yet the interest in the patristic period was unfocused. Not until later did it combine with the attempt to discover an ecclesiology which would meet the needs of the Church in Germany and resolve the tensions which were soon to appear in Möhler's own thinking regarding ecclesiology. When it did, the joining would result in Die Einheit in der Kirche, his first book.

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[1] Ibid., 1:516.

[2] This resulted in four large volumes of Die grossen Kirchenversammlungen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts in Bezug auf die Kirchenverbesserung (Constance, 1840).

The impact of these few months of travel on the young man about to begin his teaching career in Tübingen was great.[1] In later years, evaluating the importance of the experiences of this journey in his maturation as a theologian, Möhler wrote,

> What, from a human point of view, was likely to estrange my not yet fully formed direction of thought from Catholic interests, became in God's hand precisely the means of setting before me Catholicism in all its unconquerable power, in its eternal grandeur and excellence, so that my stay in Berlin must be counted the most decisive and important moment.[2]

How decisive and important it was in Möhler's personal life is impossible to measure save from this passing comment. But how influential in his theological development the great figures of the Berlin faculty were to be, especially Schleiermacher whose attraction he may first have felt through Neander, became obvious in his later career.

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[1] Georges Goyau exaggeratedly goes so far as to call Möhler "a student of the Protestant faculties of northern Germany": Die eine Kirche. Zum Gedenken J. A. Möhlers 1838-1938, ed. H. Tüchle (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1939), p. 60.

[2] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:516.

The Ecclesiology of the 1823 Canon Law Lectures

Möhler's first opportunities to express himself in the area of ecclesiology came through his lectures on canon law in the summer semester of 1823 and in various book reviews published in the Theologische Quartalschrift. The tensions between these alternate ecclesiologies give insight into the problems confronting the Church of his time and the pressure he experienced within himself to attempt their resolution in his first work of 1825.

Ever since the founding of the Ellwangen faculty eleven years before, Church history and canon law had been joined as the province of one lecturer, first Wachter, then Dresch. In 1825 the two fields were finally separated, and a Catholic instructor from the university's law faculty took over the task of teaching canon law. But for a time this field, in which he was quite unprepared, was Möhler's responsibility. That he was not happy about this arrangement was clear. His one time schoolfellow Balthasar Wörner recalled that "Möhler had to agree reluctantly to a teaching assignment for which he had done no study, for which he had no inclination and no particular talent. He had to teach canon law because, after all, it had to be taught."[1] He managed to get the course reduced from eight hours a week to five.

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[1] Wörner, pp. 256ff.

As might be expected in such a situation, the young teacher, confronted with lecturing in a field in which he was unprepared and ill at ease, fell back upon his own training in the subject. This training was along lines traditional in Catholic Germany, in some respects extending back to the council of Trent through channels provided by theologians of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, most especially and influentially Robert Bellarmine, even though these channels had been given a particular bent by the Aufklärung. Möhler's course of lectures took the form of a running commentary on Georg Rechenberger's Handbuch des Österreichischen Kirchenrechts,[1] which had been placed on the Index in 1820 for its pronounced Josephinist coloring but continued to be used widely in German seminaries until 1834.[2] This textbook would itself help to determine the ecclesiological approach of the course. In lecturing, Möhler made reference, among others, to Pierre de Marca whose defense of Gallicanism, Dissertationes de concordia sacerdotii et imperii, had been placed on the index in 1642; to Louis de Thomassin, a proponent of Bossuet's Gallican articles and a distinguished historian of canon law; to Bossuet himself; to von Hontheim; to Ferdinand Walter, a layman with a long career

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[1] (Linz, 1807),

[2] Edgar Hocedez, Histoire de la théologie au XIX^{e} siècle (Brussels: Édition universelle, 1949), 1:149f.

(he died in 1879) ahead of him but whose early work on the development of canon law had already been published; and to Johann Anton Sauter whose Fundamenta Juris ecclesiastici catholicorum was a model Febronian text. All of these stood in the post-Tridentine ecclesiological tradition established most forcefully by Bellarmine. Nor should the Gallican/Febronian/Josephinist elements so strikingly represented by these writers be regarded as unusual in that tradition: Bellarmine himself very narrowly missed being placed on the Index because he minimized papal authority in the temporal order.

The episcopalist tradition has long roots, roots which were not cut by Trent. That council had been very careful not to engage in any discussion of the nature of the Church itself. Obviously there is an ecclesiology underlying the Tridentine decrees on the sacraments, the priesthood, apostolic succession, etc. Many classical themes and images in ecclesiology find frequent reference--foundation by Christ, Body of Christ, Spouse of Christ,[1] Mother of believers,[2] Roman primacy,[3] but they receive no more than passing mention. There is considerable mention of the consensus Ecclesiae, especially in the course of the debate on tradition in the fourth session. Consensus is taken primarily to mean receptatio by the faithful: what is received by all the faithful as true doctrine is a norm of belief. Thus the Church is affirmed to be a locus theologicus.

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[1] Session 22, C. 1.

[2] Session 18.

[3] Session 14, C. 7.

The omission of any direct discussion de Ecclesia was deliberate. Although the question of papal authority vis-à-vis conciliar authority was supposed to have been settled by the bull Pastor aeternus of the eleventh session (1516) of the Fifth Lateran Council, conciliarism was still very much alive, especially among the French and Spanish bishops at Trent. Above all else, it was the desire of both the popes and the council to maintain unanimity in the face of the reformers, and so only issues on which accord could be reached were brought up for discussion. Since the nature of the Church would necessarily involve a full debate on ecclesiastical authority, ecclesiology was not such an issue.[1]

Both a papalist and an episcopalist view of the Church can be seen at work at the Council of Trent. There was clearly an emphasis on the law in the Church, on the power of regimen, with Rome at the summit. This can be seen in the affirmation that Christ came not only as redeemer, but as law-giver.[1] This tendency was constantly strengthened throughout the rest of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth. The consolidation of power within the Church in the papal office, and through it, in the Curia, is characteristic of post-Tridentine ecclesiology.

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[1] Yves Congar, L'Église de saint Augustin à l'époque moderne (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970), p. 364. Many of the subsequent quotations are cited in Congar.

At the same time, many of the bishops present at Trent, especially the Spanish bishops, maintained the infallibility of a general council if not without, at least prior to papal confirmation. Although at the end of the last session a formal request was made for the pope's approbation of the *acta* of the council, it is significant that Trent's decrees were issued as decrees of the council, not of the pope *sacro approbante concilio*.[2] This was part of the larger debate on the episcopal office, a debate deliberately left unresolved at the council: whence is episcopal authority derived--is it of divine right or from the pope? In fact, the two sides were not so sharply distinguished as that question would imply. Even the French and Spanish bishops, those who stood out most determinedly for an episcopacy *jure divino*, acknowledged that the pope had a role as a mediator of that divine authority. Diego Lainez, the strongly papalist second General of the Society of Jesus, based his position on the medieval distinction between order and jurisdiction.[1] Because jurisdiction over a particular diocese is given by the pope separately and apart from episcopal ordination, it is clear that jurisdiction comes from the pope, while the power of episcopal orders comes directly from God. This issue of jurisdiction was central to the debate which arose as a result of discussion of a proposed canon concerning the requirement of episcopal residency within a diocese at the opening of the twenty-third session. This in turn led directly to the issue of the pastoral office of the bishop. For Lainez maintained that the title vicarius Christi, the ancient title of all bishops, should not be applied to the episcopal office because of its power of orders, which was centered about the Eucharist, but rather because of its jurisdiction, which was delegated by the pope, who held the fullness of jurisdiction. Thus the logical consequence was that the title vicarius Christi applies properly only to the bishop of Rome; any other bishop was given this title not proprie, because of the very nature of the pastorate, but "pie . . . sacramentales actus exercet."[2] So, the pastorate consisted really of sacramentales actus for the individual bishop, all of which were ordered to the Eucharist.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] J. Alberigo et al., eds., *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta* (Freiburg: Herder, 1962), p. 775.

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[1] Diego Lainez, Disputationes Tridentinae, ed. H. Grisar (Innsbruck, 1886), 1:148.

[2] S. Merkle et al., eds., Concilium Tridentinum (Freiburg: Herder, 1901f.), 9:231.

Against this position of Lainez, the French and Spanish bishops appealed to what they understood as the high scholastic notion of the communication of jurisdiction, namely the designation of materia subiecta, i.e., the delimitation of jurisdiction to a particular diocese. In itself, the power of jurisdiction is thus universal and is given to the bishop by and with ordination, while the exercise of that universal jurisdictional power is given to the bishop of Rome alone.[1] This was, in fact, an insistence that the pastoral role of the bishop brought with it both potestas regendi and potestas pascendi, the latter of which carries with it the magisterial office of law-giver and teacher. The debate was left unresolved at Trent.

Where there was agreement at Trent is that the Church is a visible society, hierarchically structured, in which the role of teacher, of carrier of tradition, is largely assimilated to that of law-giver. That assimilation is entailed by the very fact that the teaching office was treated under the heading of jurisdiction. Post-Tridentine theology developed these emphases.

Thus--to take three major representatives--Peter Canisius, in his widely used Catechisms, constantly stressed the visibility of the Church as a societas inaequalis, a society hierarchically structured with the pope at its summit. Canisius was firmly in accord with Lainez and was an important figure in the papalist development of post-Tridentine thought.[1]

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[1] Ibid., 9:179, 213f.

There is an interesting foreshadowing of Möhler in the work of Thomas Stapleton, who sought in his controversial work not to refute Protestant positions one by one but to discover a central point the affirmation of which would entail the denial of all those positions. He found that central affirmation in the authority of the Church. Stapleton defined the Church as "the multiple assembly of those who adhere to the name of Christ."[2] Although a moderate for his time in his understanding of the extent of papal authority, Stapleton is extremely strong in his emphasis on the visibility of the Church and the authority of the hierarchical magisterium. "In matters of faith, it is not what is said, but who speaks, that is of importance to the faithful."[3] He went so far as to claim that the Fathers of the Church were the extraordinary figures they were only because they were bishops and thus received the grace of Orders and partook of the magisterium.[1] It is Stapleton who apparently coined the term Ecclesia docens as a description of the hierarchy, a major step in the direction of simply identifying Church and hierarchy.

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[1] Canisius died in 1597. See J. Lecler, "Die Kirchenfrömmigkeit des hl. Petrus Canisius," Sentire Ecclesiam, ed. J. Daniélou and H. Vorgrimler (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), pp. 301-314.

[2] Thomas Stapleton, Principiarum fidei doctrinalium Demonstratio methodica (Paris, 1620), I-IV, c.6; idem, Principiarum fidei doctrinalium Relectio (Paris, 1620), I, q. 5, a.I. Stapleton died in 1598.

[3] Thomas Stapleton, De principiis fidei doctrinalibus (Paris, 1620), X, c.5.

But the greatest of the post-Tridentine theologians was unquestionably Robert Bellarmine who stressed the external, visible Church to the point where he taught that Christ's headship over it is due, not to his being the source of grace, but rather to his being the historical founder of the society of which his vicar is still head. He defined the Church as "the assembly of people gathered together by the profession of the same faith and in the communion of the same sacraments under the rule of legitimate pastors, especially of the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff."[2] Several points may be noted in this definition. The Church is an assembly of people--a society--whose marks are profession of faith, not merely belief, and reception of sacraments. These marks must make that society visible. In fact, in this definition there is no room for an invisible Church at all. Elsewhere Bellarmine further strengthens this exclusion of the "spiritual" Church by explicitly noting that no interior virtue ("non . . . ullam internam virtutem") is required for membership in the Church, only that external profession of faith and participation in the sacraments. "For the Church is a gathering of men as visible and palpable as the assembly of the Roman people, or the kingdom of France or the republic of Venice."[1] This exclusively visible society is hierarchical, since some of its members are pastors under whom the rest of the members are gathered. It should also be noted that Lainez's position at Trent is espoused in its most stringent form: there is one *vicarius Christi*, the pope.

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[1] Stapleton, Principiarum fidei doctrinalium Demonstratio methodica, III-VII, c. 12.

[2] R. Bellarmine, Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei adversus huius temporis Haereticos (Ingolstadt, 1586), 4, III, 2. Bellarmine died in 1621.

Bellarmine was far too astute a theologian to fail to recognize that there must be more to the Church than this. He admitted that he was speaking *ab externis*, and tried to set the balance right by treating of the Church as made up of body and soul.[2] By this analogy, he intended to indicate *one* reality which is both spiritual and corporal, i.e., visible. His manner of expression, however, led many subsequent theologians to invoke his authority for distinguishing within the Church between what is spiritual and what is external.

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[1] Quoted in Congar, pp. 372f.

[2] Ibid.

The absolutism of seventeenth-century politics led to a further hardening of the _societas inaequalis_ analogy for the Church. Since the Church was likened to the secular state, when the state came increasingly to be identified with the ruling class, and more particularly with the monarch, the Church inevitably by the force of the analogy began more to be identified with the hierarchy and, more precisely, with the pope. A further specifically theological basis was given this trend by a distinction introduced into the concept of tradition, which had been affirmed against the reformation as a second source of revelation: _traditio passiva_ referred to the content, to what was handed down, while _traditio activa_ referred to those who handed down the _traditio passiva_, the hierarchy. Since _traditio_ was a category under _revelatio_, the hierarchy was now theologically subsumable under revelation itself.[1] This absolutizing of polity was accompanied by a theology for which certitude had become the overriding concern. Certitude, the absolute assurance of right belief and correct formulation, came in practice to mean conformity with what was currently being taught in the Roman schools which were under the supervision of the Curia. This search for certitude, or rather this desire to preserve certitude, was given a slightly different twist and reaffirmed as the true goal of theology by the "Cartesian" theology which dominated Catholic thought in the eighteenth century.

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[1] See A. Michael, _Dictionnaire de théologie catholique_ (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1903), 15:1320f.

Not only is the Church a *societas inaequalis*, it is also a *societas perfecta*, i.e., it contains within itself everything that it needs to fulfill its end.[1] Initially this was affirmed against Erastianism. It also succeeded, however, in excluding any eschatological activity of Christ, any decisive act of God needed for the perfection of the Church. All that required divine intervention was the final suppression of the Church's enemies and the vindication and public demonstration of what had always been true of it. Since certainty of teaching was increasingly seen as an integral aspect of the Church's task, the *societas perfecta* came to be identified with those who did have all that was required to fulfill that end, the hierarchy.

Starting with Stapleton, a distinction was made between the *Ecclesia docens* and the *Ecclesia discens* or *credans*, a distinction which did not achieve its full clarity until the turn of the eighteenth century. In accord with this, two forms of infallibility were discussed: active infallibility for the hierarchy and passive infallibility for the laity. Fénelon spells this out by claiming for the hierarchy *infaillibilité de décision*, while the laity have only infaillibilité d'intelligence et de docilité.[1]

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[1] See C. Munier, "Le droit publique ecclésiastique à travers ses définitions," *Revue de Droit canonique* 14 (1964): 32-63.

Möhler ironically summed up this ecclesiology: "God created the hierarchy, and so has shown more than enough care for the Church until the end of the world."[2] But that caustic estimation might well apply to the view of the Church which the young Tübingen theologian was expounding in his course in canon law at the very time that that statement was written.

Möhler defines the Church in his canon law lectures by giving its genus and specific differences within that genus: "The concept of that Church falls under the higher concept of the association [Gesellschaft], and, since the characteristic which differentiates one association from all other associations lies in the end which it seeks to effect, and since the Church's end is the diffusion of religious truth and the fostering of holiness and morality, the Church is a religious association."[3] Within the species

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[1] Congar, p. 384.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 497.

[3] "Vorlesungen aus dem Kirchenrecht," manuscript in the library of the Georgianum in Munich, 4-0, no. 1, sheet 1, p. 1. Möhler's canon law lectures have not been published in their entirety. The manuscript cited here was destroyed in the course of World War II. A copy, however, had been made in 1932 by J. R. Geiselmann, a portion of which was published in his Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus, pp. 399-403. An extensive outline is given in his "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," Das Konzil vol Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht,

"church," what is distinctive of the Christian Church is the character of its truth, holiness and morality. These are expressed respectively in doctrine, external cult and constitution. All three are externally determined: the distinctiveness of Christian doctrine is discoverable by comparing its truth with all other truths; these definite truths of Christianity must be taught in such a way that they can be personally appropriated by the hearers, which requires certain external forms, the inner cohesiveness of which is the cult; the constitution of the Church is the connectedness of all the individual members in the manner prescribed by law.

Clearly Möhler's Gesellschaft is his translation of societas. The Church is defined by locating it within the larger or, as Möhler puts it, "higher" framework of human societies. The basis for this conceptualization of the Church is decidedly anthropocentric. Möhler continued the post-Tridentine emphasis on the visibility of the Church over against the spiritual, invisible Church, which he, like most Catholic theologians, understood to be the basis of Protestant ecclesiology. In addition, the canon law lectures show Möhler's affinity with the "sociology" of the Aufklärung

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3:341-420, esp. pp. 347-358; substantially the same outline is repeated in his "Der Wandel des Kirchenbewusstseins und der Kirchlichkeit in der Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," Sentire Ecclesiam, pp. 531-675, esp. pp. 541-558.

as it evidenced itself in Wessenberg's ecclesiology. Implicit in the reform program of the vicar general of Constance was the assumption that the Church is a religious body only in the sense that it fosters religion in its members, for religion, which is essentially morality, must be a quality of the individual since only the individual can make moral choices. Thus the Church became the collectivity of religious individuals who acknowledge the teaching of Christ. This similarity to the ecclesiology implict in Wessenberg's measures in Constance or in Werkmeister's or Huber's ideas, does not indicate any direct influence on Möhler. In large part this individualist emphasis in his canon law course may well have been dictated by the baroque and enlightenment canonists who provided his sources. But it is also true that nowhere in his notes does Möhler criticize this tendency. Throughout the lectures the unity of the Church is the result of believing individuals, a union effected by coincidence in doctrine, cult and constitution. The objective unity of the religious association has its roots in these essential areas. All these areas are expressions of the one Christian reality, an idea of the relationship between God and man. Here Möhler speaks as a student of Drey who had sought to demonstrate that the master idea of which everything else in Christianity was an expression, an elucidation or corollary, was the Kingdom of God.[1] But in Möhler's lectures that idea finds its home not in the community but in the individual. "Since the Christian religion is objectively one, so too the Church representing this objective unity must be one, i.e., since the objective unity of the Christian religion is manifested in the different members of the Church, it brings them into unity."[2] The Church is one because all its members in some way perceive the one idea which is Christianity, although they may express that idea in different ways. Thus the Church is the point of intersection of all the individuals who make it up.

If the Church is to express that unity visibly, however, there must be some uniformity of the ways in which the members express the one idea of Christianity. "But because the divine Redeemer gave a doctrinal content, ordained a cult and formulated, in its elements, a constitution, so this objective unity (of the Christian religion) must be expressed in its threefold relation within the Church, to wit, as unity in doctrine, in constitution and in cult."[3] Thus, the first of the traditional "marks" of the Church, oneness, is grounded in the members of the Church, not in its divine founder. For it is the perception by many of the one idea of Christianity and the threefold expression of that perception which gives unity to the Church. This oneness is furthered by the activity of the members in that the realization of the idea must be worked out extensively and intensively, i.e., more people must perceive the idea of Christianity through doctrine, cult and constitution, and each must individually and through his association with others deepen his appreciation of that idea.

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[1] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, pp. 17f.

[2] "Vorlesungen aus dem Kirchenrecht," sheet 2, p. 1, quoted in Geiselman, "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," p. 349, n. 4.

[3] Ibid.

Möhler understands the catholicity of the Church as being opposed to particularity, i.e., the identification of the Church with a nation or state. The Church is intended for all men, because its truth is the same for all men. The truth of the Christian religion is absolute, the same in every possible situation. Thus it is suitable for all men, i.e., it is universal. The Church is the manifestation of that religion, it is, as Möhler says, in a peculiar description, the copy of the original. Since it is the representation of a truth intended for all, the Church is intended for all. The Church is that form of association which is suitable for all men.

When Möhler takes up the third mark of the Church, holiness, the influence of the Aufklärung makes itself felt. The moralism of the eighteenth century leads Möhler to equate holiness with ethical rectitude. Obviously that notion of holiness cannot be simply predicated of the Church understood as the association of its members. Consequently Möhler refers this moral holiness to the idea of the Church primarily and only secondarily and in a diminished form to the working out of that idea in the members. Möhler leaves the question there in his notes for the canon law lectures, but an interesting admission has been made pointing toward the "alternative" ecclesiology found in his articles of this same period in the Theologische Quartalschrift. For if this moral holiness is truly a mark of the Church, when one says that it in fact refers to the idea of Christianity and at the same time is not found in the fullest way in any one or all of the Church's members, then the implication cannot be avoided that this idea is found in the Church in a way that is not true of any one or all of its members. In short the Church must be more than simply the aggregate of its members--the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Thus, by an implication which Möhler does not pursue, it must appear that the Church cannot comfortably be located under the "higher" category of association.

After defining the Church and discussing its marks, Möhler poses three questions: why should there be a Church? why should that Church be visible? and why should that visible Church take on the form of a particular external institution? His answers to all three are squarely in the post-Tridentine tradition. The need for a Church arises out of the human need for certainty regarding the truths of the

Christian religion. Here is the emphasis on certainty that appeared so strongly in the seventeenth century. That assurance cannot be supplied by sola scriptura, contrary to what Möhler and most Catholic polemicists regarded as the view of the reformation. For to interpret the written word correctly requires the exercise of reason and that, says Möhler in opposition to the enlightenment notion of a similar reason in all men operating in similar fashion to reach similar conclusions, differs from person to person. Thus many differing understandings of scripture will be reached, and eventually, because of the lack of certainty, it will be "as if no revelation had ever been given."[1] Clearly Möhler still understands revelation to be a series of doctrinal positions expressed in propositions, in the classical line of post-Tridentine theology.

The danger which Möhler saw is that the principle of sola scriptura combined with the enlightened reliance on autonomous reason must finally end by replacing positive revelation with the pure truths of reason. To prevent this, the word of God must be constantly made present and living, and this requires the Church. The Church, then, makes possible an objective understanding of scripture. It simultaneously protects the positivity of revelation and provides believers certainty.

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[1] Ibid., sheet 3, p. 4, quoted in Geiselmann, "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," p. 351.

The need for the Church to be visible flows from this point concerning the Church's necessity. As has been noted, Catholic ecclesiology from Trent on was constantly concerned to emphasize the visibility of the Church against its understanding of the Protestant notion of the invisible Church. Möhler, however, like any theologian, could not simply deny the invisible spiritual Church. Rather, he says that the invisible spiritual binding together of the members is the first reality, out of which the visible Church grows and toward which it strives as the final reality. Before there can be a working harmony between teacher and student, there must first be an internal harmony of mind and interest between them--an example that may have come easily to the young professor teaching his first course. Thus the spiritual union precedes the visible. And since the goal of the visible Church is spiritual, namely holiness, it aims toward a Church which is spiritual. Thus, the invisible Church is the first and the last, but it is not the only. The visible Church stands between, arising out of the invisible Church and bringing about its fulfillment. This is grounded in human nature: every internal harmony, every unifying principle, necessarily seeks external expression.

That rule remained a guiding principle in Möhler's future ecclesiology. The relationship of the spiritual and perceptible communities, even in the canon law lectures, is very different from the body-soul analogy that Bellarmine had employed, and which had been used in a misunderstood sense by succeeding theologians. For Möhler's explanation, brief and inadequate as it is in these early lectures, despite the static conception of the Church which had been passed to him from post-Tridentine theology, nevertheless introduces the notion of development into his ecclesiology. The visible Church develops out of a spiritual unity and in turn furthers the development of that community. An organic understanding is already at work here and is seen much more clearly in the "alternative" ecclesiology of the Theologische Quartalschrift articles.

The visible Church, in order to accomplish its invisible end, must grow "extensively," i.e., in numbers. That requires a teaching office. It must likewise grow "intensively," here still understood in terms of the deepening religious life of the members as individuals. That requires worship or the existence of a cult. In saying this, Möhler notes that he has answered his third question--that concerning the need for a visible Church in the form of a determinate external institution. If a teaching office and an external cult are both necessary, then a definite institution is required to govern and direct them. If the Church is to expand in numbers without losing the certainty of its teaching, then there must be a magisterium which authorizes the proclamation made by local teachers and missionaries. If the members of the Church are to increase in true holiness in accord with the truth of the Christian religion enshrined in doctrine, then the cult which accomplishes that growth must be organized and directed to insure uniformity and forestall aberrations. The Church is then the necessary organ by which Christianity makes itself felt in the world. Möhler uses Bellarmine's body-soul analogy in its accepted sense once again. The Church is the human expression of the idea of Christianity as it is grasped by the Church's members. It is the idea of Christianity, the idea of the relation of God to humanity, the Kingdom of God as Drey would say, which is the soul of the Church. But the soul could have no effect on the visible without a visible organ, the body. Thus the Christian idea may have priority in importance and originally in time, yet once the Church has been founded, then it takes priority in time, i.e., the individual comes to the idea only after being introduced to the community.

The need for the external organization of the Church, for an institutionalized authority, raises for Möhler the question of the divine aspect of the Church which has been defined as a human association. Two points are suggested in accord with the "classical" ecclesiology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

First, the Church is divine by origin. Here Möhler seeks to defend the tradition of Bellarmine against the Aufklärung. Every association can be either "willed," i.e., dependent on human initiative, or "positive," i.e., existing apart from human will, and so of divine will. Some recent writers had tried to explain the Church by a kind of "contract theory": the Church is an external association formed by the coming together of the followers of Jesus's teaching. Planck, for example, traced the Church's origin to a communal contract in which the conflicting aspects of primitive Christian teaching were reconciled.[1] Möhler, in opposition to this, emphasizes the positive foundation of the Church by Christ. This is the divine aspect of the association.

Is that divine authority rooted in the Church's historical foundation equally communicated to all the members, i.e., is it an "equal" or an "unequal" association? Möhler responds in terms of the post-Tridentine _societas inaequalis_. He emphasizes that this inequality does not refer to the inner "value" of Christianity which is present throughout the _societas_ in all its members, nor to the goal of the association, moral holiness, which is open to all members. Rather, it refers to authority.

> In order to preserve [his truth] pure and unfalsified even in the time immediately following upon himself, Christ found it necessary to confirm in a position of higher leadership those men whom he himself had taught and to let them work out the consequences according to Acts 2. How much more necessary must this confirmation be for teachers when his doctrine was no longer spread by men immediately instructed by him but rather by such as had received it from a hand a thousand times removed

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[1] G. J. Planck, _Geschichte der christlich-kirchlichen Gesellschaftsverfassung_ (Göttingen, 1803).

> from him and were nevertheless both to preserve it and pass it on pure and unfalsified.[1]

The Church's authority comes from Christ as its founder. This is expressed in scripture and is recognized in that the apostles exercised power which could not be of human origin, e.g., the forgiveness of sin. They regarded themselves as different from the other members of the Church by reason of this authority and based that difference on divine sanction. The Church's role is primarily that of a teacher, a view which had been dominant since the council of Trent and reinforced by the moralistic religious outlook of *Aufklärung* Catholicism. The need for divine confirmation of those officially designated as teachers within the Church increases with time, and it is this confirmation which ordination and jurisdiction supply. Thus the Church is definitely an "unequal society"; it is divided into members who teach and members who learn, the now classical distinction between *ecclesia docens* and *ecclesia discens*.

The second point regarding the divine element in the human association which is the Church refers not to the origin of the Church but to its continuing life. Möhler has already noted the need for the continuing confirmation of teachers within the Church, and it is within this context that he discusses infallibility.

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[1] "Vorlesungen aus dem Kirchenrecht," sheet 2, p. 2, quoted in Geiselmann, "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," p. 355, n. 23.

> Just as the religion of Christ in and for itself is truth, so too must the Church as the expression and manifestation of this bear within itself the character of truth and therefore must be able not to err in its formulae regarding essential points of the religion of Christ or rather in its explanations and maintenance of them.[1]

Infallibility is necessary because the Church is the image of the Christian religion, a copy of the original, as Möhler has described it. If the original is truth, then the copy cannot proclaim error without ceasing to be itself, i.e., a copy of truth. This infallibility which is needed for the Church to be the Church requires the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Both this indwelling and the infallibility which is its consequence have as their goal the preservation and transmission of the teaching of Jesus, pure and intact. Once again the central concern is certitude. Möhler stresses that the Church transmits the tradition, it does not create new revelation. Indeed, he carefully corrects himself when referring to the Church formulating key points in the Christian religion by hastening to add that these formulations are really to be understood only as explanations. The indwelling of the Spirit and his gift of infallibility are then essentially preservative in their effect on the Church. The presence of the Holy Spirit is understood in the notes of the canon law lectures not as an ongoing principle of life but as a guard against alterations in doctrine.

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[1] Ibid., in Geiselman, "Der Einfluss der Christologie des Konzils von Chalkedon auf die Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," p. 355, n. 22.

By his insistence on the *inaequalis* characteristic of the *societas*, it becomes clear that the transmission of tradition is accomplished by the hierarchical magisterium. Since infallibility is concerned with this transmission, infallibility is really a quality of the hierarchy, and one must conclude that the hierarchy teach infallibly (in whatever fashion that may be expressed) not because they are members of the Church but rather that the Church is infallible in its teaching only because it has the hierarchy within it. In fact this same implication must be made about the source of infallibility, the indwelling of the Spirit: the Spirit is not present with the hierarchy because he is present in the Church, but rather is present in the Church because he is first present in the hierarchy. Möhler is led by force of his presuppositions to identify the Church with the hierarchy. This is certainly not his intention. Indeed, although there is no indication in the notes of his lectures, his insistence that magisterium serves tradition and is not the source of new revelation may have been an attempt to reject the tendency within the *traditio activa*-*traditio passiva* distinction to bring the magisterium under the category of revelation.

The canon law notes present an ecclesiology very much in accord with the tradition of the counter-reformation and baroque theologians and canonists, colored by the characteristic concerns of the Aufklärung as seen in a representative figure such as Wessenberg, viz., moralism, individualism, the emphasis on the paedegogic role of the Church. To what extent, however, may these notes be taken as an indication of Möhler's own thinking during his first years on the Tübingen faculty? There is no question that the lectures for which these notes were written placed the young professor in an awkward position. He was caught unprepared and forced to comment on the textbook at hand. To do so he had to fall back upon his own training a few years previously and the standard authors employed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Further, the notes from which we have drawn the sketch of his ecclesiology are only the introduction to the course of lectures which were, after all, not on the Church but on canon law. All of these cautions must be kept in mind when evaluating the importance of these lecture notes for Möhler's development.[1]

Nevertheless, once these cautions have been duly noted, the lecture notes from 1823 cannot be simply dismissed as the result of forcing the new faculty member into an uncongenial task. First, to treat the views of the Church expressed in the notes as simply borrowings from others which do not in any way reflect Möhler's own opinions, we must suppose that the young professor was willing to teach ideas with which he was in firm disagreement. That the disagreement was firm becomes apparent from the _Theologische Quartalschrift_ articles of this period if we accept them as the expression of Möhler's true thoughts on the Church. Unless we accept both ecclesiologies, that of the canon law notes and that of the occasional pieces and reviews, as reflecting as yet unmediated alternatives both of which the young theologian found persuasive, although the latter increasingly more so than the former, we must, it seems, accuse Möhler of extreme intellectual dishonesty in the lecture room.

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[1] Geiselman invariably lays great weight upon these notes, a fact for which Rudolf Reinhardt has criticized him; see the latter's "Die katholisch-theologische Fakultät Tübingen im ersten Jahrhundert ihres Bestehens. Faktoren und Phasen der Entwicklung," p. 19, esp. n. 44.

Second, Möhler was forced to rely in large part on his own earlier training when preparing his lectures in canon law. But it seems scarcely probable that the young priest had at the very start of his academic career already completely rejected his own education. To believe so one must also disregard Möhler's own statements that _Die Einheit in der Kirche_ in 1825 represented a breakthrough for him to a new understanding of the Church.

Third, the lecture notes do not represent simply slavish copying of recognized authorities. There are within them important attempts to incorporate new elements into the combination of classical and Aufklärung views of the Church's nature, purpose and attributes. For example, Möhler's comments on the "idea" of Christianity, the achievement of a moral relationship between God and man, are drawn from his teacher at Tübingen, Drey. The fact that these comments do not fit comfortably into the framework of the ecclesiology of the notes indicate that Möhler was attempting something more than simply taking over the work of traditional authorities, even if the attempt was not very successful.

The "Alternative" Ecclesiology of the Occasional Writings of 1823-24

How are we to reconcile then the ecclesiology represented in these lecture notes of 1823 with another quite different and in many instances opposed ecclesiology in the pieces which Möhler was publishing during 1823 and 1824? Perhaps the best answer is that we are not to reconcile them. We should recognize the tension produced by their existence as their author did. Three points may be noted, however, in partial explanation of the existence of this other ecclesiology.

First, as in the case of the canon law lectures Möhler did not intend to give a full and detailed treatment of the Church. In fact this "alternative" ecclesiology is even more sketchily drawn than that found in the lecture notes. For in the latter case the author himself wrote a brief summary of the ecclesiological presuppositions underlying the lectures on canon law as an introduction. In treating the occasional writings, however, we are forced to draw out the ecclesiological presuppositions. Thus we are confronted with two conflicting sets of presuppositions, not two opposed tracts de ecclesia. The most important of these articles are on Carolingian episcopalism,[1] and reviews of works in Church history and canon law.[2]

Then, too, the forum must be considered. In the canon law lectures Möhler spoke as a member of the Tübingen faculty to a lecture hall full of students, most of them candidates for the priesthood. It is understandable in such a situation that he might feel restrained in giving his own relatively unsupported views, especially if he himself were conscious of their not being fully explored in his own mind. The published pieces, on the other hand, were all printed anonymously in accord with the then policy of the Quartalschrift.[1] Thus Möhler may well have felt freer to advance as yet untested ideas. This may appear the more likely when it is realized that the audience for these pieces would not have been primarily young students, but professional theologians.

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[1] "Karl der Grosse und seine Bischöfe. Die Synode von Maynz im Jahre 813," Theologische Quartalschrift 6 (1824): 367-427.

[2] Especially the reviews of Theodor Katerkamp's Des ersten Zeitalters der Kirchengeschichte erste Abtheilung: Die Zeit der Verfolgungen (Münster, 1823) in Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 484-532, of August Neander's Der heilige Johannes Chrysostomus und die Kirche, besonders des Orients, in dessen Zeitalter (Berlin, 1821-1822) in 6 (1824): 262-280, of Ferdinand Walter's Lehrbuch des Kirchenrechts, mit Berücksichtigung der neuesten Verhältnisse (Bonn, 1822) in 5 (1823): 263-299, and of Sebald Brendel's Handbuch des katholischen und protestantischen Kirchenrechts. Mit geschichtlichen Erläuterungen und steter Rücksicht auf die neuesten kirchlichen Verhältnisse in den deutschen Bundesstaaten, und namentlich im Königreiche Baiern (Bamberg, 1823) in 6 (1824): 84-113.

Finally, the fact that all save one of the most useful of these piece are reviews of recent books is significant. Möhler presents his ideas in the context of criticizing the work of others. Since in some instances the positions criticized are very close to positions espoused in the canon law lectures, we have the opportunity to see the young theologian examining and often rejecting his own ideas and views.

Möhler's earliest published work is his review of Ferdinand Walter's textbook on canon law. Walter, who had been lecturing in canon law at Bonn since 1819, became increasingly ultramontane during his long career (he ceased teaching in 1875). But even at this early stage of his career, he took a strong papalist position in opposition to the episcopalism which had been so largely the rule in eighteenth-century Germany, had found its voice in the writings of Hontheim, and which was still at work in Wessenberg's Constance. Möhler was certainly an episcopalist in Church polity at the beginning of his career. It was only a few months before he reviewed Walter's book that he discussed with Neander in Berlin a history of the councils of Constance and Basel-Florence which would have been a study of conciliarism. But he was an episcopalist with a difference. His grounds for structuring the Church around the bishops as individual ordinaries, in national hierarchies and in general councils have nothing to do with the Febronian arguments. As he gives his position in criticism of Walter, his reasons are drawn from a thought-world totally foreign to Hontheim or, among Möhler's contemporaries, Wessenberg.

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[1] This policy lasted until 1831. Stefan Lösch has with awesome thoroughness and patience sifted through the material and given a probable listing of the authors for all the material published from 1819 until 1831 in the journal; see his Die Anfänge der Tübinger Theologischen Quartalschrift, pp. 52-118. Several previous attempts to do this service had been made; see Wörner, pp. 195-310 (which remains useful because of comments on the authors and works reviewed by Möhler), Knöpfler, pp. 146-149, and Edmond Vermeil, Jean-Adam Möhler et l'école catholique de Tubingue (1815-1840). Étude sur la théologie romantique en Wurtemberg et les origines germaniques du modernisme, pp. 480-486. These attempts have been superseded by Lösch's work, although it remains true that the discovery of an anonymous author more than a century later (Lösch's listing appeared in 1938) must be regarded as probable and even highly probable, but not certain.

Möhler's fear is that Walter's defense of the papal system as opposed to the episcopal system could make an unfortunate and misleading impression on readers who do not know better. For Walter is claiming too much. As Möhler summarizes his position, Walter pretends that episcopalism "was never acknowledged by the pope or conceded in practice, so that up until now it is not part of [the Church's] constitution, but exists only as the opinion of a school."[1]

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 267.

But this simply is not true. Möhler claims not to be aware of a single proposition central to the episcopalist view of the Church for which an array of testimonies could not be produced "from the popes themselves."[1] Further, the tenets of the episcopal system had been put into practice centuries before the papalist position appeared as its rival. In support of this, Möhler cites statements of Gregory the Great, Hadrian II, Innocent III, and the recognition extended to the council of Constance by Martin V and to the first sixteen sessions of the council of Basel by Eugene IV. Then we are given an indication of the idea of the Church which underlies the reviewer's concern for episcopalism. "It must certainly be recognized by anyone who has the slightest knowledge of history that the bishops as a whole had the clearest and fullest consciousness of the immediate divine origin of their rights, and that universally binding conditions can arise only from the universal Church and can gain the force of law only through its acceptance."[2] The implication is that behind and beneath any hierarchical structure, be it the papacy or the episcopacy, is the universal Church. There is not the slightest hint of the tendency to identify the Church with the hierarchy. Quite the contrary, it is the Church, however that is to be understood, which brings the hierarchical office into existence and which gives it its authority, at least by acceptance. To reduce a position which has been so widely held in theory and in practice by the whole Church over so long a period of time as the episcopalist system to the status of an opinion held by one school of thought is to render all issues fundamental to the Church's constitution uncertain. It is to say that the universality of the Church is not the guarantee of its truth. "In other words, one would destroy the essence of Catholicism."[1]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., pp. 268f.

The "essence of Catholicism" is universality. Clearly the universality with which Möhler is concerned is not the geographical spread of the Church, but unanimity of thought and practice, therefore of belief and, more especially, of life which marks the Church with regard to basic issues. A very different ecclesiology from that found in the canon law lectures stirs behind these statements. It becomes clearer as Möhler expands his critism of Walter.

In treating conciliarist theories, Walter had made the statement that the pope has the right of confirmation with regard to all decisions and decrees of general councils and that no decision or decree of such a council has force without that confirmation. This affirmation had been a keystone of papalist ecclesiology since the counter-reformation and certainly found its roots well before the sixteenth century. But Möhler's attack is sweeping, so sweeping that it is obvious at once that he stands as far removed from the ecclesiology of Bossuet and Febronius as from that of Bellarmine and Stapleton. He takes issue with Walter's papalist assertion not on the basis of the rights of the episcopacy as a whole, but from concern for the rights of all the faithful. In short, his argument is not with the rights of the papal office, but with the rights of any office within the community of the faithful. There is no papal prerogative purely because of office to summon, preside at or confirm general councils. "Whoever has the greatest external strength, convokes, whoever has the greatest internal strength, presides, and the whole Church confirms."[1] Here the emphasis on the universal Church, which is the foundation for the defense of episcopalism against Walter's papalism, becomes the counter-position to an ecclesiology built around a hierarchy of offices. The notion of "the whole Church," the community of all believers, is Möhler's central interest and the source of his disagreement with Walter. Möhler is an episcopalist because the universal college of bishops gathered in general council seems to him a more adequate concretization of the whole Church than the pope. But true authority both in teaching and in discipline resides in the entirety of the Christian people and not in any particular office. He who can most fully vocalize the belief of the whole Church is the one who acts as spokesman, not because of the office he holds but because of who he is.

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[1] Ibid., p. 271.

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[1] Ibid.

So, when Möhler criticizes the papal claim to confirm conciliar decisions, he does so not simply in opposition to the pope's right to exercise such authority, but to anyone's right to do so by reason of office. For if all the Churches assembled in a general council affirm their belief on a particular point, no one should dare to maintain that some further affirmation is required.

> If several Churches hold some one doctrine as not handed down and so do not believe it, can what has not been believed everywhere, by everyone and at all times, and so is not a Catholic statement, now be changed by the confirmation of the pope into a statement which has been believed everywhere, by everyone and at all times, and so is Catholic? Can what has not been contained in the consciousness of believers become something which has been contained in it?[1]

Here is the conjunction of an ancient formula and a very new idea. Möhler appeals in the first sentence to the standard of Vinceent of Lérins for determining the content of ecclesiastical tradition: Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est. The second sentence is intended to be a paraphrase of the first in which what it means to be believed everywhere, by everyone and at all times is clarified. It means to be a content "in the consciousness of believers." The Vincentian canon, originally a particular rule of faith, is interpreted in terms of a communal consciousness within the Church. This consciousness is the self-reflective identity of the Church, which means that the content of faith, that which has been believed always, everywhere and by everyone, is the conscious appropriation of what the Church is. The Church itself is the unthematized creed, the creed is the thematized life of the Church.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 273f.

All the churches are of equal importance, for no one local church monopolizes the consciousness of the whole Church. Therefore, when they assemble in council, all the bishops possess equal authority, except for that higher authority conveyed by the "internal strength" which belongs to the individual by virtue of personality rather than office. The attribution of a confirmatory right to the bishop of Rome must entail recognition of an authority not only above that of each of the other bishops but above all of them. But if catholicity means the ultimate authority of the "whole Church," then such papal authority destroys catholicity. This papal supremacy implied in the right of confirmation of conciliar decisions means that one man by virtue of office could declare a doctrine to be Catholic belief, literally the universal belief, because of his individual consciousness of faith apart from the consciousness of faith of the community of all believers. If this is what the papalist system intends, then it is to be decisively rejected.

In this earliest of his published writings, Möhler gives a remarkably different view of the Church than in the notes of the canon law lectures which he was delivering in Tübingen that same year. His conclusions regarding the episcopal versus the papal form of Church government might at first appear perfectly in accord with those found in the Febronian program of the previous century or those advocated by Wessenberg in Constance or Werkmeister in Württemberg and so might seem reconcilable with the ecclesiological presuppositions of the lecture notes. But when one begins to draw out the principles underlying the criticism of Walter's papalism, it becomes apparent that an entirely different ecclesiology is taking form.[1]

This new theology of the Church is expressed more clearly and confidently in another review in the Theologische Quartalschrift later in 1823 of the first volume of a history of the ancient Church by Theodor Katerkamp. This professor of Church history at Münster had been part of the circle surrounding the Princess Gallitzin, the educational reformer Fürstenberg and the poet-convert Count Stolberg. As a product of that early cell of Catholic Romantics, Katerkamp's Church historical works are designed not as scholarly exercises but as general tours of the past, displaying the heroism, the majesty and the inherent strength of the Church. He is interested in the great sweep of history and in the sometimes larger than life figures who mark its course.[1] It is precisely this tendency to emphasize the externally striking for which his reviewer in Tübingen criticized him.

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[1] A remarkable example of the development of Möhler's thinking on the Church is given by a comparison between this 1823 review and one written by him in 1829 of a later edition of Walter's book, Theologische Quartalschrift 11 (1829): 565-572. In the latter we read: "The work before us, of which four editions have appeared in six years, owes this distinction above all to the sensitivity for the Church with which it is written. For a long time a work was needed which rose above the non-churchly orientation of the Josephinist canonists and adopted a standpoint which answered the higher demands of the time. The reviewer has been especially struck by an entirely characteristic spirit of reconciliation and unification, a spirit of balance, of bringing together, of adjustment, moderation and agreement as well as noble generosity" (pp. 566f.). And in a complete reversal of judgment, Möhler writes: "Never once can it be said of Herr Walter that he embraces some one system, be it the papal or episcopal system. For it always bespeaks a very prejudiced and narrow mind to give oneself to so exclusive a system, as if theory could be imposed upon life with all its forms and consequences" (p. 570).

Möhler begins the review, however, by joining Katerkamp in his praise of the past. This leads him to a conclusion which clearly separates him from the Catholic Aufklärung. With a rosy picture of the poor and persecuted Church of the first three centuries before his eyes, Möhler sees the destruction of the system of the Catholic Church in Germany as an almost unmixed blessing opening new and boundless possibilities.

> We seem to be busier, we seem to have abandoned our apathetic listlessness and to have taken up a more

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[1] For an excellent brief appreciation of Katerkamp's work, see Werner, pp. 395-397.

> vigorous life as much in a religious as in a scientific sense. These are the fruits of the transformation of the nature of the German Church. Providence knew best what was required to breathe new life into the moribund corpselike form of the German Church. . . . In all the calamities which we bemoan, if we examine what is essential, things have never been better for the Catholic Church than at the present. We have been forced to look to ourselves for assistance; previously we looked to external circumstances for it. Riches and pomp have never been the salvation of the Church, otherwise the earliest Church would have been the most unfortunate.[1]

Möhler thinks that the earliest Church was quite the opposite, that it was a golden age when the Church was most what it should be. In his review of Walter's canon law text he had written of the need for the Church to remain disentangled from affairs of state, that although it might be true that the idea of the Church is higher than the idea of the state, it does not follow that the actually existing state must be ruled by the actually existing Church. This latter situation he calls a "mixing-up of concepts."[2] Whatever material gains may result in the short term, the long term result is invariably unfortunate for the Church. "Thus when the Church rules over the state, as in the middle ages, it must already have lost its unique character, i.e., it functions no longer as the Church as soon as it begins to rule over the state. Already within it freedom must be transformed into force and spirit into mechanism."[3] The

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 485f.

[2] Ibid., p. 282.

[3] Ibid., p. 285.

Church's "unique character" is what German Catholics now have the opportunity to recover. For the Church in Germany since the secularization of so much of its property has been forced to do what the pre-Constantinian Church did--to turn inward to find within itself its own identity, its own strength, its own means of survival. The Church must not look to the world around it to find its proper mode of activity and its proper sphere of influence. It must turn within and fully and consciously appropriate itself.

A decided shift in ecclesiological thinking from the canon law lecture notes is at work here. The Church is indeed a _societas perfecta_ containing within itself everything which it requires for its own functioning. But it is so self-sufficient that it does not need outside models. It is by turning inward that the Church discovers what it is, not by looking outside itself. Analogies and contracts may be useful, but can also distort. Thus one cannot simply subsume the Church under the category of a _societas_ or _Gesellschaft_ and then further specify it as _inaequalis_. The Church is a society like no other, it is unique, and it must reflectively grasp its uniqueness if it is to remain true to itself and grow in accord with its own nature. If one seeks an analogy, it is more like an organism than an assembly of individual members.

Möhler is exuberant in his rejectiom of alien categories into which the Church must fit itself. Waxing more enthusiastic on the unexpectedly happy result of the secularization in Germany, he writes of a Church which borders on formlessness. He seems to erect an indirect ratio between the external forms of Church life and the depth and richness of that life itself: the more extensive and elaborate the former, the weaker and more attenuated the latter.[1] This tendency to place an antagonism between institutional forms and the vitality of the community of believers is evidenced throughout the review of Katerkamp's book in the attitude which Möhler takes toward ecclesiastical office, an attitude already seen in the earlier review of Walter's work when the "internal strength" of the individual was exalted at the expense of the official position of pope or bishop.

The review of Katerkamp's Church history might almost be read as a point by point critique by Möhler of his own canon law lectures.[2] For the young Church historian, however, the central issue is what he perceives as Katerkamp's woefully inadequate notion of history.

> The author regards and treats the hierarchy as the central point about which all else revolves and so as the guiding principle of his whole history. But the treatment of history from a hierarchical standpoint is not a

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[1] Ibid., p. 487.

[2] This is exactly how Geiselmann suggests the review be read, "Der Wandel des Kirchenbewusstseins und der Kirchlichkeit in der Theologie Johann Adam Möhlers," p. 561.

> communal vision. By itself, apart from all religious dress, it is, if we may put it so, only a half-religious approach to Christian history and may be compared to a naturalistic view of man which grants that his spiritual faculties have been given him by the divinity, to be sure, but then excludes God from any part in their fulfillment. Thus the author is saying something like this: God has created the hierarchy and so has shown more than enough care for the Church until the end of the world. According to the higher, truly Christian view, which is especially apparent in Catholicism, the Spirit of God alone is the eternal principle in the Church, nourishing it and leading it to its goal. Everything else is the organ, means, etc., of the Spirit, and anyone who selects one of these as the center of this history has grasped that history only externally.[1]

Several points may be noted. One is Möhler's criticism of Katerkamp's hierachical concerns as not being a "communal vision" of the Church. Community, Gemeinschaft, has become the central category for talking about the Church, rather than Gesellschaft, the German equivalent of societas, which is the word regularly used throughout the canon law notes. Even though it has been part of the basic ecclesiological vocabulary for two and a half centuries, societas is no longer an adequate tool for understanding the nature of the Church.

Second, the "hierarchical standpoint," the ecclesiology of office, is only a "half-religious approach," to be likened to "a naturalistic view of man." Möhler's description of that "naturalistic" anthropology, that it admits the creative activity of God upon man but then excludes the divine from the working out of the human, makes it clear that he identifies this with deism. This is used as an analogy for an ecclesiology which would limit the divine action upon the Church to its origin: as God had created the universe and then left it to run on its own until the end of time according to the deists, so Christ had instituted the Church and left it until his return. As the laws of nature provided the cohesive force of the universe, so the hierarchy are the cohesive force of the Church. The closed universe of Newtonian physics served as an analogy for the *societas perfecta*, the Church.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 497.

Most striking in this passage, however, is the concise statement of the central element of this "alternative" ecclesiology: "The Spirit of God alone is the eternal principle of the Church." One very important advantage to the Spirit-centered view of the Church, Möhler believes, is that it allows history its full weight. Katerkamp has grasped history "only externally," for he has mistaken an aspect of the Church for the very center. By building his history around the hierarchy, he has taken an expression of the Spirit and elevated it to that organizing principle which the Spirit alone can be. In doing so, in order to maintain any continuity in the course of the history he narrates, he is forced to posit the immutability of hierarchical forms. According to Katerkamp, the hierarchy in its essentials and in its forms is the same under Constantine as it was in the lifetime of the apostles. This, Möhler notes, is palpably ridiculous. It is as if one engaged in writing the history of a particular academic institution were to make the essence of that institution the fact that its faculty had always enjoyed the same rights and privileges.[1] That kind of error is the natural result of mistaking inessentials for essentials at the very outset.

If the hierarchy is the principle which holds the Church together through space and time, then it is to be expected that the hierarchy is the guarantor of tradition, i.e., of the beliefs and practices which most deeply express the common life of the faithful. It is the unbroken line of bishops which certifies the continuance of authentic Christianity. This statement, which might well be found in any of his own canon law lectures, Möhler completely rejects. He admits that, in the study of the first centuries of the Christian era, it could happen that one would be led to such a notion. For in those first happy centuries those chosen by the community to fill the office of bishops were as a rule so deeply imbued with the tradition, the ongoing life of the community, that they could act as guarantors of its authenticity and judges of opinions and practices within the community. But those fortunate times soon came to an end. For bishops who had no such grounding in the common life of

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[1] Ibid.

Christians were forced on the Church by popes and princes. They did not arise from the community, they were imposed upon it. Since they did not experience and live the tradition of the Church's life, they could not, bishops or no, speak for its authenticity. So, Möhler observes, there came a time when the Sorbonne not only accorded the king of France the right to summon a general council but also advised that it might be well to widen the membership of the council much beyond the limits of the episcopacy, for it could not be expected that the bishops would have either knowledge of or interest in the matters to be discussed, "since the hierarchy was no longer the organ through which the ancient tradition was kept alive."[1] Such an opinion is unthinkable if one makes the hierarchy the central formative principle of the Church as Katerkamp does. But it is no problem at all if one recognizes the Holy Spirit, unconfined to any particular institutional channel within the Church, as the enlivening, unfailing, ongoing vitality of the community of believers. We believe the truth of the Church's teaching, not because it comes from the hierarchy, but because the Spirit of God will not allow Christian truth to be destroyed. The Spirit stands at the beginning, the middle and the end of the Church's history. Long before the sad decline of true Christian communal life among the members of the hierarchy, the Spirit had been preparing other means for the preservation of the tradition. In those first centuries it had been embodied in creedal formulae and doctrinal statements, but it had also become part of the life of the whole community in its liturgy, prayers, hymns and popular devotions.[1] Thus there is no member of the Church who is not a bearer of the tradition and a guarantor of the continuance of true Christianity.

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[1] Ibid., p. 499. Möhler's interest in the period of the great western schism and the conciliar theorists is again evident.

This is not only a rejection of Katerkamp's style of historical writing with its concentration on heroic figures and great events. It is a total dismissal of the division into _ecclesia docens_ and _ecclesia discens_ which had become ingrained in the received ecclesiology. Every member of the Church teaches every other member, and all the members learn from each. If this be the case, then all particular forms of Church polity are matters of indifference. Ecclesiastical forms are rendered fluid, one giving way to another as the first's usefulness fades. Thus the history of the Church cannot be told by recounting the development or the workings of one particular style of Church government and life, for all styles, all offices, all forms are merely stages of a process, instruments of a larger reality, and so finally _adiaphora_.

Underlying this is an ecclesiology not simply divorced from institutional forms but practically antagonistic to them. It may happen that a secular ruler could be on some occasion a better witness to revelation than a pope, for it is not the office as such which constitutes a person as a witness but the depth of the life of the Spirit within that person. Nor was ecclesiastical office of more importance in the ancient Church. If we now turn to the witness of the bishops of the first centuries for testimony regarding the life of the Spirit in their time, it is not because they were ordained to a special position, but rather that the voice of the whole community was manifest in their election. One did not become a witness to the tradition because he became a bishop, but rather one became a bishop because his personal union with the Spirit indicated his fitness to be a witness.[1] This is the opposite extreme from Stapleton's claim that the Fathers of the Church were formers of tradition only because they held the episcopal office. As Stapleton had claimed that the faithful would accept truth not because of what was said, but because of who said it, Möhler writes that they will not believe the Church's teaching because the hierarchy has transmitted it, but rather because the Spirit will not let truth vanish in the Church, and it is of no particular consequence who proclaims it, for all can be equally the organs of the Spirit.

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[1] Ibid.

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[1] Möhler makes the same point regarding ordination to the priesthood in his review of Neander's study of Chrysostom and the Church of his time, ibid., 6 (1824): 271f.

The relationship between those who hold office, especially bishops, and the whole community becomes clearer when Möhler attacks Katerkamp on his forced interpretation of Acts 15, 22: "The crowd was silent" after Peter's comments on the imposition of the Mosaic law on non-Jewish converts. This statement in Acts gives occasion for Katerkamp to note that the mass of believers have no role in deciding doctrinal or disciplinary controversies. This arbitrary selection of a proof-text is exploded by Möhler who points out that a few verses earlier (15, 5-7) the crowd had taken a very vocal role and that they fell silent only because Peter's speech gave reason for quiet consideration, i.e., not because he was an apostle, but because of the intrinsic merit of his remarks.[1] Further, the true picture of the relationship between the apostles and the rest of the community can be found elsewhere in Acts, e.g., 4, 32: "The whole community were of one heart and one soul." The ancient Christian community shared in the same Spirit and lived accordingly. The laity did not stand tight-lipped in the presence of a despotic hierarchy. The clergy and the laity shared together in the common life. The role of those holding office in the Church is illustrated by the decision finally reached by the Christians at that discussion in Jerusalem and recorded in Acts 15, 29. "'If you follow this, you will do well.' What a difference between this and 'Si quis aliter dixerit, anathema sit'!"[1]

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[1] Ibid., 5 (1823): 505.

The common sharing of clergy and laity in the life of the ecclesial Gemeinschaft, which is the life of the Holy Spirit, is a recurring theme in these early articles and reviews. It is Möhler's concern for this which lies behind his explanation of the word "layman" (Laie) in his review of Brendel's Handbuch des katholischen und protestantischen Kirchenrechts published early in 1824. Once again Möhler is engaged in attacking the hierarchically centered ecclesiology for which in the previous year he had criticized Katerkamp. That conception of the Church is responsible for the opposition of clergy and laity as separate classes with a consequent denigration of the latter. But the term "layman" is derived from laos theou, people of God, the phrase employed by the Septuagint for those separated out from the mass of humanity and made into God's peculiar portion.[2] Thus it is a term of distinction and all members of the Church are laity, the clergy simply being those who fulfill a particular task. All members of the Church share in a universal priesthood to which they have all been ordained by the anointing with chrism in Baptism. All share in the kingship of Christ into which they have been introduced by the signing with the cross at Baptism. Since all the faithful are priests and share equally in the same common life, all are responsible for the preservation and growth of the Church and the spread of Christianity.

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[1] Ibid., p. 506.

[2] Ibid., 6 (1824): 104. Möhler has taken this derivation of "laity" from Pierre de Marca, the Gallicanist archbishop of Paris (d. 1662), De discriminatione clerici et laici 11, 11.

> The high conception which the Catholic Church has of the Christian people is not expressed merely as an idea in a ceremonial way. It is also manifested in life to the degree that the people have authority in making decisions and enforcing them.[1]

Thus bishops, on returning from a council, should assemble the members of the community in order to present to them the decisions reached at the council and explain the reasons behind them. The people give approval by their acceptance.

Möhler's opinions on liturgical reform expressed in his writings in the Theologische Quartalschrift of 1823 and 1824 are based upon notions of Gemeinschaft-Church, common priesthood and relative importance of ecclesial office which are the marks of his pneumatocentric ecclesiology at this early stage of his theological development. Toward the end of his review of Walter's canon law textbook, he took the opportunity to make some remarks regarding liturgical practice. He expresses great concern for the use of the vernacular in worship which was a major element in the liturgical reform program of Wessenberg. But whereas the vicar general of Constance treated this as another step in the direction of a German Church freed from Roman curial control, Möhler emphasizes that the reason to celebrate the Church's prayer in the language spoken by the people is precisely that the liturgy is the Church's prayer, that it is the community of believers. Only the inertia of accustomed use can explain the passive acceptance of Latin as the language of Church ritual. Möhler can think of no other way to explain the idea that the common worship of the faithful can be expressed in a language foreign to them. People are free to use their language in every other area of their lives save the one which would yield the noblest use of that language, that of a means of expression for religious feeling in common worship.[1] Möhler's desire for a freeing of liturgical language is prompted not by ecclesiastical nationalism, but by its contrary. He is convinced that what unites believers in worship goes much deeper than the level of verbal expression, much deeper than the level of national differences and language barriers, so that the universal communal life of the Catholic Church stands in no danger of being splintered by the use of different tongues and can thus be given voice in the speech most natural to the congregation.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 6 (1824): 105f.

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[1] Ibid., 5 (1823): 293f.

But his concern with the liturgy went further than the question of language. In 1824 Möhler published a study of the Carolingian episcopate which took the form of an investigation of a synod held at Mainz in 813. Noting the prohibition of private Masses by that council, he took the occasion to voice his own objection to the practice of private celebrations. He refers to it as the result of the gradual disappearance of the proper understanding of the Mass. The Mass has come to be considered "a totally sacrificial act which ought to be performed only to bring about this one particular effect."[1] It is true that the Mass has a sacrificial aspect but it has come to be purely objective, the act of Christ and not the act of the community. If it were seen once more as what it is, the union in symbol and reality of Christ and his people, then the practice of a priest celebrating Mass without the community being present would be recognized as "nonsense" and disappear at once.

The dissolution of the distinction between the clergy and the laity in the Gemeinschaft-Church is reflected in liturgical practice in Möhler's call for the restoration of the cup to the laity in communion. Withholding the cup from some of the members of the community makes reception of communion, which should be the highest realization of the members' union, into a sign of separation. He does not argue for communion under both forms from the scriptural command of Jesus nor from the practice of the early Church.[1] Nor does he in any way question that the eucharistic presence is complete under either form. Indeed, it is precisely this latter fact which leads him to maintain that it is senseless to withhold the cup from some while extending it to others. Such a policy has, as its sole purpose, the erection of an artificial barrier between clergy and laity. Let all communicate under both forms or let none. Equality in the life of the community demands the general sharing of bread and cup.[2]

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[1] Ibid., 6 (1824): 420f.

Sources for the "Alternative" Ecclesiology

The ecclesiology which underlies the canon law lectures had long roots. The ecclesiological stance undergirding the views expressed in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* articles and reviews, if not possessed of roots quite as long, was not without support in recent Catholic theology.[1]

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[1] Both grounds had been used by Hirscher, the professor of moral and pastoral theology at Tübingen, in his *Missae genuinam notionem eruere ejusque celebrandae rectam methodum monstrare tentavit (accedunt duae formulae missales lingua vernacula exaratae)* (Tübingen, 1821).

[2] *Theologische Quartalschrift* 6 (1824): 648f. This discussion of the restoration of the cup to the laity is part of Möhler's review of Hermann Joseph Schmitt's *Harmonie der morgenländischen und abendländischen Kirchen. Ein Entwurf zur Vereinigung beider Kirchen. Nebst einem Anhange über die anerkannten Rechte des Primats in den ersten acht Jahrhunderten. Mit Vorrede von Friedrich v. Schlegel* (Vienna, 1824).

Gügler

Möhler's emphasis on the Holy Spirit as the guiding principle and the formative element of the Church had been anticipated in the works of Alois Gügler.[2] This professor first of Old Testament exegesis, later of pastoral theology at Lucerne had battled the remnants of the Catholic Aufklärung at close quarters. Lucerne was within the diocese of Constance and therefore under Wessenberg's dominion. But Gügler lived in a very different thought-world from that of his vicar general. He had idolized Goethe and Schiller until the new romantic school appeared when he became an ardent admirer of Tieck, Novalis and the Schlegel brothers.[3] Gügler's description of theology as

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[1] Particularly instructive on the Catholic precedents for Möhler's thought in its first stages is J. R. Geiselmann, "Johan Adam Möhler und die Entwicklung seines Kirchenbegriff," Theologische Quartalschrift 112 (1931): 1-91. This was the first of Geiselmann's many works on Möhler and he unfortunately tries to prove too much. He is so intent on defending Möhler from any influence of Protestant contemporaries, especially Schleiermacher and even Schelling, that he overstates his case.

[2] Born 1782, died 1827.

[3] Joseph Laurentius Schiffmann, Lebensgeschichte des Chorherrn und Professors Alois Gügler, 2 vols. (Augsburg, 1833), 2:101.

"the consciousness of God articulated or raised to science"[1] may, in its precise wording, have been influenced by Schleiermacher but aptly summarizes the direction of his writing throughout his career. Theology is rooted in an experience, a consciousness, which is also a self-awareness. Thus one must speak of man in order to speak about God and speak about God in order to speak about man. The concept of the human being is itself a form of revelation and is "tinged with divinity."[2] Revelation and human history become two aspects of one reality: "History is the terrestrial, revelation the heavenly course of one intertwined stream."[3] One must attempt to penetrate to this stream of life both in history and revelation and in the individual and his community. The positive sciences, artistic creation, mathematics, historical study, all are ways of tapping and formulating this basis of life, but "the first and most all embracing explanation of this basis which deserves to be called a true explanation, is religion."[4] Religion is an exploration of feeling, of the prereflective awareness of this basis of life. "Feeling is the divine form in man awakened into freedom of which we spoke above as the creative grounding action at base, and is therefore the living ground and source of all which is human."[1] The uncovering of this feeling or basis of life, its cultivation and expression are rightly called "mystical." Indeed all theology begins with mysticism. This is the strength of Catholicism. "In a certain sense mysticism rules alone in the Catholic Church."[2] One can go so far as to say "The spirit of Catholicism is the mystical."[3]

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[1] Joseph Widmer, ed., Güglers nachgelassene Schriften, 7 vols. (Lucerne, 1827-1840), I: Güglers Reden an studierende Jünglinge über Gegenstände höherer Bildung, p. 117.

[2] Die heilige Kunst, oder die Kunst der Hebräer, 3 vols. (Landshut, 1814; Lucerne, 1817), 2:51.

[3] Ibid., 2:65.

[4] Ibid., 2:123.

If feeling is the divine form or capacity for God's revelation "awakened into freedom," the question must be raised of what awakens it. Gügler's answer is that the Holy Spirit rouses this feeling which underlies consciousness but slumbers.

> In a soul the Holy Spirit can be neither increased nor lessened. Through his continuous manifestations its obstacles and disturbances more and more fall by the way and disappear. He increasingly broadens his domain and flows vibrantly into consciousness and into all its activities. But with his first ray the whole loftiest ideal of all perfection is already introduced into the soul, just as the sun is fully and majestically risen even if lowering clouds still veil its brightness from our eyes.[4]

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[1] Ibid., 2:150.

[2] Einige Worte über den Geist des Christentums und der Literatur im Verhältnis zu den Thaddäus Müllerschen Schriften (Lucerne, 1810), p. 108.

[3] Ibid., p. 106.

[4] Ibid., p. 130.

What is true of the individual is true also of the community. He speaks of the Spirit as the principle of life within the Church dwelling within the believing community at all times in all places.[1] Thus the Spirit of life is also the Spirit of unity and universality, binding all into a living community.

> The one living root supporting and nourishing all the branches, the one Spirit, the one soul present and active in all the limbs, permeating the whole, makes the Church into one Body of Christ. For it is the mediating bond. It binds all together into one communal whole and, in short, makes the Church catholic.[2]

Gügler has taken Bellarmine's classic image of the Church's body and soul and proclaimed the Holy Spirit to be the soul. The visible community is the body of the Church. Both body and soul are necessary for the existence of the Church, but the central and decisive element is the divine Spirit.

Möhler's transformation of the Vincentian canon from a practical norm for evaluating the authenticity of doctrine into a guide for discovering the contents of Christian consciousness is foreshadowed in Gügler who in 1819 wrote: "Those things acknowledged always, everywhere and by everyone are only individual expressions and aspects of this one all-unifying Spirit."[3] The uniformity of doctrine which Vicent of Lérins had singled out as the mark of Christian truth is but another evidence of that which lies at the base of Christian self-consciousness, the Spirit of God.

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[1] Ibid., p. 109.

[2] Ibid., p. 112.

[3] Ibid., pp. 112f.

Gügler's primary concern in his writings was actually the principles of correct scriptural exegesis. He believed all theology to be a further reading-out of scripture. Nor is this at odds with his statement that theology is the articulation of the consciousness of God. For scripture, like Church doctrine, liturgy, popular devotions and institutional forms, is an expression of that consciousness. The Spirit who awakens that consciousness objectifies it in scripture and in ecclesiastical forms.[1] After one has mastered the languages of scripture, studied its literary forms and traced its sources, one must be certain that one is rooted in the same spirit (or Spirit) in which it was written. This assurance is given if the exegete has fully united himself with the Church, the community whose soul is the Spirit who moved the authors of the sacred text.

The affinities between the Lucerne professor and the young Möhler are many.[2] But Gügler also puts in its strongest form the problem which Möhler does not seem to have seen in 1823 and 1824 when writing the articles and reviews in the

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[1] Ibid., p. 103; also Gügler, Die heilige Kunst, 1:49f. and 66f.

[2] Gügler is not alone at Lucerne as a forerunner of Möhler and the subsequent members of the Tübingen school. His colleagues, Franz Geiger and Joseph Widmer, although less clearly influential than Gügler, also provide parallels;

Theologische Quartalschrift which supply the hints of his "alternative" ecclesiology: the identification of the Holy Spirit with the "soul" of the Church makes the Church the incarnation of the Spirit. Möhler sensed the danger of pantheism in this identification and struggled against it in 1825 in Die Einheit in der Kirche, rejected it entirely in his reading of Schleiermacher (Athanasius der Grosse in 1827) and sought to replace it as the central principle of ecclesiology throughout the various editions of Symbolik from 1832 until his death in 1838.

Baader

The movement from discussing the Church under the classical category of societas or Gesellschaft to describing it as a Gemeinschaft, a community which is more than the sum of its parts, which has a "life" or a "soul" of its own, was presaged in the "sociology" of Franz von Baader.[1] This remarkable and widely influential layman had first gained notoriety at the age of twenty-one with his dissertation which attempted to combine the alchemical notion of phlogiston with a metaphysics of the world-soul.[2] He was introduced to the writings of the Protestant mystic Johann Kaspar Lavater

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see Werner, pp. 360-362. On Geiger esp., see Geiselmann, Theologische Quartalschrift 112 (1931): 54-61.

[1] Born 1765, died 1841.

[2] Vom Wärmestoff, eine Probeschrift (Vienna, 1786).

by Sailer, became interested in the theosophical speculation of Louis Claude de Saint Martin compounded of kabbalistic and neoplatonic elements and became enamored of the work of Jakob Boehme. After close association with Friedrich Jacobi and the pietist circle surrounding Matthias Claudius and Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling in Hamburg, he moved to Munich where he and Schelling became intimately involved in one another's work. Through all of this he maintained a successful career as a mining engineer which he left only when appointed to the chair of philosophy and theology at the university of Munich. Later in his career he became absorbed in ecumenical issues between the eastern and western churches and began so frequent a correspondence with Tsar Alexander I that he became the unofficial theologian of the Holy Alliance.

Baader's social doctrine evolved from an early enlightenment liberalism inspired by Mary Wollstonecraft and Adam Smith, through a period of anarchism during which he was fascinated by William Godwin, to a deep conservatism, passing at various times under the influence of Sailer's ecclesiology, Schelling's doctrine of freedom and his own deep revulsion at the excesses of the French revolution. By the time Möhler began his studies at Ellwangen, Baader had moved far away from the social theory of the Aufklärung. That had been concerned with individuals who established relationships with one another in societies which had capabilities beyond those of any individual member because of law. Law itself was the relationship between the members now made precise and given force by the agreement of the members. The society thus formed was not therefore simply the aggregate of its members but its powers were equal to the accumulated strength of the membership. This society was legally constituted, hence rational. The basis of its being was not only capable of being expressed but had in fact been expressed in rational categories. For Baader the state is a community bound together by love rather than by law. This is a return to the Augustinian dictum that defines a community as an assembly of reasonable beings united by common agreement as to the objects of their love.[1] Or rather, it is a further precision. For in the state, according to Baader, the mutually agreed upon objects of the members' love are one another. Baader had by now utterly rejected Adam Smith's principle that the common good is best served by each individual's pursuit of his own private good. This was replaced by the conviction that "the doctrine of the capacity for human perfection is all important. This is [man's] unique character in the world-system."[2] This perfectability is possible only in community and therefore the love of one's fellows is in fact also love of self, for it perfects the self. This love of self and love of one's fellows come together in the community's love of itself. This spirit of communal love becomes the community's "god."

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[1] De civitate Dei 19, 24.

[2] From Baader's diary, quoted in Hans Grassl, "Franz von Baader (1765-1814)," Katholische Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert, 1:279.

> The bond of love or unifcation which freely, because from within (through attraction not through force), binds many hearts as members of one and the same communal reality, can only be conceptualized as the actualization of one and the same truly high or central reality dwelling within all these hearts at once (i.e., as their communal god) to which they have all subordinated themselves in respect of law. An individual from among these members cannot properly withdraw from this union or enter into it unless, in the first instance, he renounces his subordination to that high communal reality or unless, in the second instance, he enters into that subordination. In the former situation the withdrawing member closes himself to the central indwelling of the communal god (as true communal spirit) in that he wishes to affirm himself as center (god) and by so setting himself in place (on that throne) of this god denies himself in his heart. In the latter situation, on the other hand, such a member opens himself to the central indwelling of this god and, when he denies himself before it, it accepts him into itself.[1]

The "god" of the community is its own "communal spirit," its Gemeingeist. The emphasis is not first on the individual but rather on the whole of which the individual is a part. The social theory of the Aufklärung had understood society as the expression of individuals. Baader's social theory envisions the individual as the expression of the community. For the individual apart from the community does not really exist--he "denies himself in his heart." The whole gives validity to its constituent parts.

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[1] Über das durch die Französische Revolution herbeigeführte Bedürfnis einer neuen und innigeren Verbindung der Religion mit der Politik (Nurnberg, 1815), Franz von Baaders Sämmtliche Werke, ed. Franz Hoffman, 16 vols. (Leipzig, 1851-1860), 6:13f.

In Einheit in der Kirche, Möhler will make use of Baader's idea that withdrawal from community means self-idolization. Even in the second edition of Symbolik (1833) he will write of the individual's humanity being more fully realized in proportion to the breadth and closeness of the community to which he belongs.

Law has not totally disappeared from Baader's community of love, although ideally it should. For, to the extent that the members of the community are moved by love, law is unnecessary. Thus in the community which is perfectly itself, i.e., a community, the Gemeingeist reigns supreme and law is quite beside the point. But no such perfect community exists, and the measure of the distance between any community and the ideal is the importance which law assumes within it.

> If love alone as the organic organizing and assimilating life-principle made it possible to balance interiorly each external difference (separation) in the manifold forms of human interaction (to abolish again that separation), so, as a rule certainly, where this balancing activity is hindered, pressure, force will appear. Those separations and differences, which must of course arise with regard to externals (as members of the organism) but are never manifested as such interiorly because they are held latent through the assimilating power of love, now emerge from their latent state interiorly as well and so malignant discord is born between them.[1]

When this discord appears, law appears in order to maintain peace. Law operates by way of coercion to restore the balance which love should provide without the use of force. Thus the truly healthy state requires very few laws and seldom resorts to its coercive power to enforce them, for the *Gemeingeist*, its "civil religion," is strong within it.[1] Möhler will call upon this idea to explain the evolution of ecclesiastical office in the second part of *Einheit in der Kirche*.

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[1] Ibid., 6:19.

In transferring Baader's social doctrine to the Church[2] Möhler confronted a heightening of the problem already noted with regard to Gügler's identification of the Holy Spirit with the "soul" of the Church. The problem is to avoid the pantheism which can underlie pneumatocentric ecclesiology, threatening on the one side the transcendence of the Spirit and on the other the freedom of the human in the Church. With Gügler the latter difficulty had come to the fore. With Baader's notion of the *Gemeingeist* transposed into the Church, the former becomes more threatening. For the *Gemeingeist* is "higher" than the love of any one member or of all the members together. Yet it is, in some way, the product of the members' mutual love. If building one's ecclesiology on the basis supplied by Gügler runs the risk of making the visible Church the embodied Spirit, building on the basis given by Baader may result in making the Holy Spirit the suprapersonal love of the Christian community.

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[1] Ibid., 6:20.

[2] Baader's own specifically ecclesiological writings appeared almost contemporaneously with *Die Einheit in der Kirche* or after it. In several instances the flow of influence is reversed and Baader seems to be building on Möhler's work. The major ecclesiological writings of Baader are contained in *Franz von Baader's Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. 10; see especially *Über die Thunlichkeit oder Nichtthunlickeit einer Emanzipation des Katholizismus von der römischen Diktatur*, originally published in Nurnberg in 1839, and *Der Morgenländische und Abendländische Katholizismus mehr in seinem inneren wesentlichen als in seinem äusseren Verhältnis dargestellt* (Stuttgart, 1841).

Möhler was not alone at Tübingen in this pneumatocentric ecclesiology. In the new *Theologische Quartalschrift* in 1819, Drey had published in four parts a remarkable study of what he saw as the "principle of Catholicism."[1] In it he takes the position which Möhler will attempt to occupy in 1825: that the Holy Spirit is the principle of the Church's life and the Christian *Gemeingeist* is his creation.

> As the principle and organ of inner spiritual union [Christ] promised and sent to all, not only to the apostles but to the faithful as well, a Spirit, holy as Christ is and one with him because he is his, who to maintain them in unity from within in affection as the holy and Christian communal spirit.[2]

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[1] "Vom Geist und Wesen des Katholizismus," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 1 (1819): 7-23, 193-210, 369-391, 559-574: the whole has been reprinted in Geiselmann, *Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus*, pp. 195-234.

[2] Ibid., p. 566.

Sailer

But if one is to understand the background of the "alternative" ecclesiology in Möhler's early essays and reviews in the Theologische Quartalschrift of 1823 and 1824 and the impetus he experienced toward writing Die Einheit in der Kirche, without question the single most important figure, although not an immediate influence, is Johann Michael Sailer.[1] Möhler and Sailer met once, briefly, during the former's short period of parochial ministry. The older man was approaching seventy and already a patriarchal figure in German Catholicism. In 1822, while Möhler was setting off on his scholastic odyssey around the major German theological faculties, Sailer was named coadjutor of the diocese of Regensburg, succeeding to the see seven years later, some months before his seventy-eighth birthday. Behind him was a long and rich career in the course of which he had touched the lives of an extraordinary array of people. At one time or another, he had taught Gügler and Wessenberg, Bestlin and Gratz and Hirscher, and was a frequent correspondent with Baader. His teaching career was a long one in which he brought his influence to bear on the theological and spiritual formation of a very large number of priests from all over Germany, several of whom subsequently became bishops. Within a few years of his death, he was hailed as the "immortal Church father and Church doctor of the nineteenth century."[1] A Bavarian by birth, Sailer had early felt called to the priesthood and was received as a Jesuit in 1770. Three years later, when the Society was suppressed, he continued his studies at Ingolstadt and was ordained to the priesthood for the diocese of Augsburg. Because his theological and philosophical interests led him far afield from the customary bounds of Aufklärung Catholicism, he several times ran into opposition from faculty and clerical colleagues and so his teaching career was somewhat checkered. He taught briefly at Ingolstadt, then ten years at Dillingen, spent five years in parish life, then back to Ingolstadt for one year, 1799-1801, after which the university was transferred to Landshut, where he spent two decades.

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[1] Born 1751, died 1832.

Sailer's own ecclesiology underwent a striking development. His first theological work[2] was so strongly influenced by his teacher at Ingolstadt, Benedikt Stattler,[1] that it may fairly be regarded as a simple summary of Stattler's thought. Stattler, while an individual thinker in many other respects, was in his ecclesiology a model of the post-Tridentine traditon. The subtitle of one of his books proclaims his intention to treat the Church under the heading of a *societas legalis inaequalis* and his interest in ecclesiology immediately turns to the *felix nexus potestatis spiritualis cum temporali*. But Sailer could not remain content with this moralistic, individualistic, law-oriented vision of the Church any more than Möhler would later. Sailer was first and always a spiritual director. His consuming interest and the source of his personal influence on so many others lay in fostering a spirituality rooted in scripture, the use of imagination and personal charity. The writings which poured from his pen--forty volumes in collection and then not complete[2]--touched on a broad range of issues in theology but always in service to the encouragement of piety. Thus his doctrine of the Church is a product of his concern with the devotional life of the individual Christian.

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[1] Lorenz Lang, dedication to Sailer of his biography of Bestlin, quoted in Georg Schwaiger, "Johann Michael von Sailer (1751-1832)," Katholischen Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert, 1:59.

[2] Theologiae Christianae cum philosophia nexus (Augsburg, 1779). Geiselmann gives a fine description of Sailer's ecclesiological thought at various stages of his career, marred only by his usual defensiveness when treating one of his heroes, in "Kirche und Frömmigkeit in den geistigen Bewegungen der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts," Sentire Ecclesiam, pp. 474-530. This is in large part a summary recapitulation of his Von lebendiger Religiosität zum Leben der Kirche. Johann Michael Sailers Verständnis der Kirche geistesgeschichtlich gedeutet (Stuttgart: Schwabenverlag, 1952).

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[1] Born 1728, died 1797. Sailer seems especially to have been using Stattler's *Demonstratio catholica sive Ecclesiae Catholicae sub ratione societatis legalis inaequalis lege fundamentali methodo demonstratum cum ostensione felicis nexus potestatis spiritualis cum temporali* (Pappenheim, 1775) and *De locis theologicis* (Weissenburg, 1775). For an account of these parallels in detail, see Geiselmann, *Von lebendiger Religiosität zum Leben der Kirche*, pp. 42-53.

[2] Several attempts were made at issuing a full collection of Sailer's writings. The last and most complete was Joseph Widmer, ed., *Johann Michael Sailer's sämtliche Werke*, 40 vols. (Sulzbach, 1830-1841, with a supplementary volume in 1855).

Many ingredients came together in Sailer's life to enable him to break with the moralism of the Aufklärung: his early grounding through his Jesuit training in the Spiritual Exercises, his study of Kant which enabled him to break with Stattler's eudaemonistic ethical theories,[1] his fortunate discovery of a group of sympathetic colleagues at Dillingen, his close connections with the pietist-mystical-alchemical circles which played so important a role in Baader's growth.[2] Ironically, the Catholic Sailer was introduced by the Protestants Lavater and Claudius to his own mystical tradition. Through them be began to read Johann Tauler, Thomas à Kempis, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Francis de Sales and Fénelon. Sailer became convinced that no religious devotion was possible which was not rooted in experience. Conceptual knowledge could not ground religion because it is an understanding of verbal signs which stand for realities. One may manipulate the signs adeptly without ever penetrating to the realities for which they stand. This, he believes, is unfortunately often the case with his contemporaries, and it leads to disaster if it presumes to invite believers to put faith in verbal formulae or in the conceptual knowledge behind them. He who puts faith in a dead concept will find his faith as cold and dead as his God.[1]

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[1] See Gerard Fischer, Johann Michael Sailer und Immanuel Kant (Freiburg: Herder, 1953).

[2] See esp. Hubert Schiel, Sailer und Lavater (Cologne: Jakob Hegner, 1928).

True faith, faith which gives life, must be based on experience. That experience, however, is not the product of human activity. Rather it is the human being's reception of a divine activity. Man's grasp of what has happened to him is a second step, a grasping of being grasped. Thus theology may make an experience discussable in controllable terms, but the experience remains prior and transcendent to the reflective use of those terms. And no one can put his faith in another's account of his experience. Such an account may be helpful in grasping one's own being grasped. But faith springs only from that experience of personally and individually being grasped.

True to the Ignatian tradition, Sailer believes that one comes to this experience only by the use of the imagination. The senses must be stimulated if there is to be any experience. This is the method behind all his widely read devotional writings. The senses must be used in prayer in order to give the form of experience to the ever-present reality of being grasped, created, supported, loved by God. Thus, "we must imagine God, Jesus Christ, the beauty of virtue, the resurrection, eternal life, to be as alive, as present, as if we see with our eyes what we do not see, hear with our ears what we do not hear."[1] How concretely he intends this can be gauged when he claims that the beginning of faith in the incarnation comes when one imagines oneself at the manger in Bethlehem.[2] This is not, however, intended to be a recommendation of unbridled sentimental imaginative play. The product of the imagination which involves the senses and is thus experiential is a representation of a truth within it. It is, in the broad sense, sacramental, i.e., it points to a reality which it also embodies. Thus the imagination should be guided by scriptural research, historical investigation and philosophical reflection in order to make its images both true and stimulating to the senses. But if an experience is to give rise to a living piety, it must do so by calling upon the whole person. It must summon a response from the will and so pass over into action. This is the key principle of Sailer's pastoral theology, his field for twenty years at Landshut. The truth of religion, gained by painstaking research into the historical revelation and by careful reflection employing all the resources of philosophy on the results of that research, is made vivid and alive by the imagination which bodies it forth in sensible "sacramental" images giving rise to the experience of the religious truth. This is then able to become a principle of activity when finally religious truth can be said to be living in the individual.[1]

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[1] Leben Johann Michael Fenebergs, Sailers sämtliche Werke, 39:73. Feneberg (1751-1812) had been a Jesuit student with Sailer at Ingolstadt and like him became a priest of the diocese of Augsburg. He came under some suspicion because of his involvement with his sectarian relative, Martin Boos, but ably defended himself. On the death of his friend, Sailer wrote this brief biography in order to defend him against any lingering mistrust of his orthodoxy and in doing so gave one of his best short statements of his Erlebnistheologie.

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[1] Vollständiges Lese- und Gebetbuch für katholische Christen (Munich, 1786), 1:43f.

[2] Ibid., 2:23.

So much stress is laid on the individual's coming to this living truth of religion, on the need for personal experience, on the necessarily private nature of that experience since no one can put true faith in another's account of his experience, that the Church seems to disappear. For if one cannot possess living faith on the basis of another's experience, the need for a bearer of tradition disappears. Indeed, if one's faith can rest only on one's own experience, the idea of a unique and unsurpassable revelation at one moment in history becomes an obstacle to faith. It is true that Sailer attempts to counter such an idea by his emphasis on the need for scriptural exegesis and historical study to anchor the work of the individual imagination in fact. But one is still left with the individual's scholarship as the connecting link with the historical revelation. The community remains unnecessary.

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[1] _Vorlesungen aus der Pastoraltheologie_ (Munich, 1788-1789), 1:135f.

This tendency is especially apparent in Sailer's treatment of matters liturgical. The liturgy of the Church, in its texts and ritual actions, its special feasts and yearly calendar, its use of vestments and art work, is a collective imagination and, as such, is a valuable assist to the individual's imagination. The liturgy has as its goal that at which the imagination aims: the sensible embodiment of religious truth as the basis for experience. Thus in his enormously popular prayer-book he writes of the two ways in which one can most fruitfully attend Mass. The first is that

> each one should place himself in that special state of heart as though he were present on the mount of suffering outside Jerusalem and saw the dying Saviour Jesus Christ on the cross, the sacrifice for the redemption of the world actually carried out for us and all mankind in the sight of the heavenly Father. For each one who hears Mass the feeling should be as if the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world were actually slaughtered before his eyes.

The second frame of mind which he recommends is that

> each one who attends holy Mass should offer himself entirely, his body and his soul, all that he is and has and is capable of, all his thoughts and desires, to the heavenly Father as Jesus Christ offered himself on the cross for us. This self-offering, this perfect surrender of himself to the will of the all-good, all-wise and all-mighty Father is the key for the one who attends Mass. Without this self-offering the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

> on the cross can never be beneficial to us.[1]

Sailer is not completely without a sense of the communal nature of Eucharistic celebration:

> I believe the sincere Christian will find great satisfaction in being able to be present at the high Mass in such a way that he too knows what the priest at the altar is reading, signing and praying. I believe he will attend high Mass with new attention when he is able to unite his feelings with the feelings of the priest. For this reason I have translated the whole Mass into German. What a magnificent spectacle it will be for heaven when the people, and the priest in the name of the people, with one heart pray to the invisible Father and with one heart celebrate the death and life of the High Priest, our Lord Jesus Christ![2]

Nevertheless, his translation of the liturgy into German will lead, he hopes, to a union of "feelings." Those feelings are produced by the same object, but the experience of that object, when he comes to give practical suggestions to the worshippers, is unquestionably individual.

Sailer's approach to spirituality changed and developed throughout his long career as he adapted his methods to new concerns. He had been educated in a world where the Church was very obviously and securely present as an institution, and his first aim had been to kindle new fire within the breasts of the members of that institution. In doing so he unwittingly opened a path for some to reject the need for the institution all together. Some of his ardent admirers carried his individualistic pietism to its logical ecclesiological conclusion and denied any significance to the Church in the religious life of Christians save as a gathering of like-minded individuals for purposes of mutual encouragement and support. Two of his Dillingen students especially, Martin Boos and Johannes Gossner, became prominent in an extreme revivalist movement in southwestern Germany. Many of Sailer's supporters became involved, and Sailer himself defended the movement against the Inquisition as long as he could. Eventually, however, to his dismay, both Boos and Gossner resigned from the priesthood, the latter becoming Lutheran, the former pursuing an ever more extreme sectarian direction with his small band of followers.

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[1] Vollständiges Lese- und Gebetbuch für katholische Christen, 1:182. See the very useful discussion of Sailer's prayer book in its various editions in Manfred Probst, Gottesdienst in Geist und Wahrheit. Die liturgischen Ansichten und Bestrebungen Johann Michael Sailers (1751-1832), Studien zur Pastoralliturgie no. 2 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet Verlag, 1976), pp. 48-66.

[2] Ibid., 2:10.

Sailer increasingly emphasized the need for a visible Church by emphasizing the community of believers as the bearer of the tradition. By this he intended not the source of information about the historical revelation but rather the living proclamation of the apostles. For it was not simply what the apostles preached, but the preaching itself which was the revelation. Thus one must not simply receive the data, one must experience the preaching.[1] That experience is membership in the Church born of the apostles' proclamation. For the power of the apostolic message was the Holy Spirit. He spoke through the apostles. Likewise, it was the Spirit who prepared the hearers of the message for its reception. The same Spirit who gave the living force to the preaching made ready the ears of the hearers. Thus the internally spoken word of the Spirit in the hearts of those listening coalesces with the externally spoken word of the preacher who has himself first received this word through the preparatory work of the Spirit. The Church is then the work of the Spirit in the same measure that it is the product of the apostolic mission. To belong to the Church is to be part of the experience of proclamation and reception of proclamation because the Spirit who makes that experience possible is the Spirit who dwells in the Church.

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[1] See his sermon delivered as a guest preacher in

But the course of much of the devotional revival had already been set by the earlier version of the _Erlebnistheologie_. That tendency was toward an individualism leading to indifference regarding the historical Church, an indifference which could actually end in hostility, as in the extreme case represented by Boos. For if the foundation of religion is personal experience of the sacred, specifically in the sense of being loved, grasped, accepted, forgiven, saved, graced, etc., then that experience must be sought

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Switzerland (1812), Geiselmann, _Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus_, pp. 1-11, esp. p. 7.

however and wherever the individual may locate it. That might be in the privacy of his own prayer and self-examination. More likely (and more healthily) it might be in a community which shares and supports the experience. But if the latter, then it is the experience of the individual which validates that community for him, and certainly not the community which validates the experience. The Catholic pietist movement of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, of which Sailer was the most distinguished and influential representative, began in reaction against the moralism of Aufklärung Catholicism, of which Wessenberg was the last distinguished representative, but ended by reaffirming its individualism.

Not only was the present ecclesiastical community rendered of less than primary importance, the historical community became a lifeless source of restraint on one's personal experience. The vibrant expression of the living experience of grace must appear artificially constricted when forced into centuries-old forms of public and private worship, of communal relations, of leadership and decision-making, even of doctrinal positions. The Church of the enlivened, awakened believers who were united by the experience of being grasped by God seemed to have painfully little in common with the concrete, historical institution of the Catholic Church. The former was unquestionably the will of God who not only grasped individuals in saving love, but grasped them together. The latter might well appear nonessential and, in some instances, a hindrance.

The issue was heightened by the collapse of the political and economic structure of that historical institution in Germany as a result of the secularization. German Catholics found themselves faced with the task of reconstructing Church institutions after the dismantling of the old system built around the great metropolitans at precisely the moment that many of them, and these the most interested in matters religious, were wondering whether such institutions served any useful purpose in fostering the Christian life.

Thus the tension which Möhler experienced between the ecclesiology of his canon law lecture notes with its emphasis on the Church as a legal institution, a societas inaequalis, divine by virtue of its founder, endowed with full competence for the attainment of its ends, namely, the achievement of moral rectitude in all people by the proclamation of the correct doctrine of Christ, and the ecclesiology of the articles and reviews which he published in the Theologische Quartalschrift in 1823 and 1824 with its pneumatocentric structure, rejection of an essential hierarchical order, emphasis on the common priesthood of believers, and concern with the quality of the individual's experience of the holy within the community formed by the Christian Gemeingeist, is a reflection of the ecclesiological tension felt on every level within German Catholicism after the dust of the War of Liberation had settled. His attempt to resolve both the tension within and around him was published in 1825.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHAPTER II

THE PNEUMATOCENTRIC CHURCH: EINHEIT IN DER KIRCHE, 1825

In September, 1825, Möhler wrote a letter to a friend of his student days, Joseph Lipp, a letter filled with excitement.

> For a long time now you have heard nothing more from me. Now I give you myself, the image of my innermost, truest being, the accurate statement of my views on Christianity, Christ and the Church. In many respects you will find that a transformation has been worked in me. Earlier you were aware of some things within me, of others only sketched in uncertain lines. But could you see into my innermost heart, you would discover it completely changed in its religious and Christian views. I had before this only words, only the concept of Christ, now I have a totally different one, and an internal conviction says to me that it is the true one, or at least that the true one wants to grow within me. The serious study of the Fathers has stirred up a great turmoil within me; in them I discovered for the first time a living, fresh and full Christianity. And Christ willed that I read, not without fruit, those whom he inspired and summoned to his defense. When we see one another again, I will have much to tell you which compels and drives me. It is something quite different from what was earlier the loftiest or, at least, for a time, the most desired of my efforts. --Write me what you think of my work, and write especially if you have something to criticize![1]

Although one would very much like to know what that earlier "loftiest" or "most desired" effort was, it is clear from this letter that Möhler regarded the work which was now in Lipp's hands, Die Einheit in der Kirche, as marking a new direction for him and a deeply personal statement.

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[1] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler, Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, pp. 251f.

Möhler's meeting with Neander during his short stay in Berlin in 1823 had directed his attention to the Fathers. His facility in classical languages and interest in classical literature had at one time led him to consider the position of teacher of Greek and Latin at a Gymnasium. He had chosen to make his inaugural lecture in Church history a defense of the importance of patrology for theological students. Later in that term, the winter semester of 1823/24, he had delivered a series of lectures on the Stromateis of Clement of Alexandria and in the following summer semester on Chrysostom. Thus Möhler's interest in the Fathers was not first sparked by his research for Einheit. In fact, Einheit might appear as a rejoinder to Katerkamp, an attempt by Möhler to demonstrate the justice of his criticism of that author's book on the ante-Nicene Church in his review two years earlier.

But Einheit was something more important. It was the resolution of the dilemma posed to Catholic theology by Sailer's Erlebnistheologie with its enlivening effect on piety on the one hand and by the fact of a visible Church on the other. Möhler's reproduction of that tension in his own mind in the "aternative" ecclesiologies of the canon law lectures and the Theologische Quartalschrift pieces made the dilemma a personal one. Thus its resolution was experienced as a release of tension which finds its expression in the letter to Lipp and the tone of excitement which permeates Einheit.[1] That excitement, that resolution of tension, was not Möhler's alone, just as the dilemma was not his alone, although he may have been more sensitive to it and explicitly aware of it. Fifty-four years after its publication, Döllinger recalled the intensity of the reaction to Einheit:

> The warmth and intimacy which welled out of the book, the brilliant picture of the Church, drawn in the spirit of the Fathers of the Church, enchanted all of us young men. We were convinced that Möhler, from beneath the rubble and overgrowth of later times, had developed a fresh, living Christianity. The ideal of the Christian Church seemed suddenly to stand before our astonished eyes, and the more it would be developed in accord with its own unique traits and appear in its full beauty, the greater, we believed, must its power of attraction become. There hovered before us as a goal, a Church purified of defects and mistakes, as like the ideal of old as possible. In our opinion, the power of theological science should necessarily have ushered in the reform of the Church.[2]

Döllinger's recollection indicates a sense of the innovativeness and the revelatory power of Einheit for others similar to feelings which Möhler admitted experiencing in himself to Lipp. The "fresh, living Christianity" with its "power of attraction" is raised to the level of "theological science" which can bring about Church reform. What Möhler had produced was a theology of the Church which embraced personal religious experience on the one hand and the visible, hierarchically organized community on the other. In doing so he had given a theory to underpin the new ecclesiastical structure which had to arise in Germany. The tension between ecclesiologies which Möhler reveals in his own work was the counterpart of the tension present in Catholicism on every level in Germany. The resolution of that tension which so relieved the young Tübingen professor pointed the way to resolution for his fellow-Catholics.

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[1] There has been some discussion concerning Möhler's motive in writing Einheit; see edition of Geiselmann, Einheit, [14]-[17]. Geiselmann's own suggestion, that the work should be seen as a confession of faith, is interesting, but it is the context, both personal and communal, which made that confession so important both to the author and his contemporaries.

[2] J. Friedrich, Ignaz von Döllinger. Sein Leben auf Grund seines schriftlichen Nachlasses, 3 vols. (Munich, 1899), 1:150.

The Community as the locus of the Spirit

The dichotomy which confronted Möhler in 1825, arising out of the situation of German Catholic theology and his own thinking of the previous years, was that between the individual as the locus of the action of the Spirit, emphasized by the reawakening of Catholic piety and reflected in the turn to the subjective by his Catholic theological contemporaries, and the historical community with its sacramental system and magisterium. The principle of resolution which he employed in Einheit was the community understood as organism. Möhler's use of this principle proceeded in two steps. The first was to expand the locus of the Spirit from the individual to the community. The second was to interpret, in accord with the biological-organic understanding of the community, all visible forms as externalizations of internal realities. The two sections, each of four chapters, into which the book is divided, correspond to these two steps.

Wissenschaftlich Method and the Organic Principle

One way to follow the working out of this principle is to examine Möhler's method. His justification for the adoption of organic community as an image of the Church and the two consequences which he drew from it in what purports to be a patristic study is dependent on his mode of procedure. That procedure explains his treatment of ante-Nicene sources. But, in addition, it provides an indication of the way his fundamental principle operates in his theology.

There is a reference to Einheit in an 1827 review by Möhler of Alois Gengler's Ueber das Verhältnis der Theologie zur Philosophie.[1] Möhler understood Gengler as confusing faith with theology. It is not because an idea can be adequately shown to explain the appearances of a reality that we believe in that idea. Rather the demonstration of the explanatory power of the idea is of interest to us only because we already have faith in it on other grounds. The demonstration does not create faith, it reinforces it.[1] Möhler does, however, agree that this method of demonstration is the way of moving from faith to knowledge.

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[1] (Landshut, 1826). Möhler's review is found in Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 498-522.

> Conviction, [Gengler] says further, arises through the demonstration that the objective coincides with the subjective (i.e., that the manifest existent converges with the concept, i.e., that the idea, in whose truth I previously only believe, explains all phenomena). In this way I have grasped for myself the inner hidden being, hidden in that it appears only in the manifest being, and I am assured that the real objective of my explanatory ground of the phenomena is the actual existent. The reviewer also has long held this for knowledge and he has in a work of his own sought in this way to come to knowledge of a matter of faith.[2]

This earlier work which Möhler describes as having used the same method in moving from faith to knowledge is Einheit.

There is no surprise in his employment of this method. It was the "scientific" method, the way of moving from believing to knowing, which was advocated by his teacher and colleague, Drey.

In 1819 the latter had published a work which illuminates not only the direction of its author's thinking, but the early course of the Catholic Tübingen school generally and of Möhler especially, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie mit Rücksicht auf den wissenschaftlichen Standpunkt und das katholische System.[1] Throughout this ground plan for the study and teaching of theology in accord with both the demands of Catholic doctrine and practice and the "scientific standpoint," Drey is indebted to two sources, the Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums zum Behuf einleitender Vorlesungen of Schleiermacher,[2] and the Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums of Schelling.[3] Drey specifically compared his work to the former. Schleiermacher was more concerned with the formal divisions of theological study, in demonstrating the relationship of the specialized areas to the whole in accord with the idea of science.[4] That is a legitimate and necessary concern, Drey agreed, and one which he too addresses. He, however, was concerned with the material of theological study. It is here, in the determination of the material of theology, the subject matter, that Drey is in full accord with a fundamental tenet of Schleiermacher.

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[1] Möhler's review in Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 505-507.

[2] Ibid., p. 505. Earlier in the review Möhler has equated "convergence" (Uebereinstimmung) of explanatory idea and objective phenomena with "identity" (Identität), with its reminiscences of Schelling, p. 501.

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[1] (Tübingen, 1819).

[2] (Berlin, 1811).

[3] (Tübingen, 1803).

[4] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. IV.

> Theology is a positive science, whose parts join into a cohesive whole only through their common relation to a particular mode of faith, i.e., a particular way of being conscious of God. Thus, the various parts of Christian theology belong together only by virtue of their relation to "Christianity."[1]

Not only is theology related "to a particular mode of faith," it stands in service to a particular religious community.

> When this same knowledge [Christian theology] is acquired and possessed without relation to the "government" of the Church, it ceases to be theological and devolves into those sciences to which it belongs according to its varied content.[2]

Drey too held that theology arises out of the compelling need in man to raise to a reflective level the experiences which are impressed upon him, to translate his feelings into concepts and so arrange and clarify them. Religion is the most fundamental of those feelings, and so its need for this translation is most compelling.

> Theology, as a purely intellectual concern with religion, arises necessarily in man, i.e., it arises in accord with necessary laws of the whole nature of man, especially those in consequence of which he seeks to make clearer his experiences which are in themselves obscure, to hold on to them, although they are in themselves fleeting, in that he makes permanent in a concept what has stirred his heart as impermanent desire or aversion, because he is able, by means of the concept, freely to awaken and renew, as often as he wills, what affected him as an external or foreign impulse. As man

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[1] F. Schleiermacher, Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, trans. Terence N. Tice (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 20.

> deals with experiences generally, so must he with those religious experiences which interest him before all others.[1]
>
> As man's religion, his posture vis-à-vis God, so too is his theology; this is the first axiom. As man's spiritual development, so too is his theology; this is the second. Consequently as man's posture vis-à-vis God changes in accord with the process noted in the first section, and parallel with this, as his spiritual or intellectual culture changes, so too his theology changes, i.e., is formed, expanded, grounded.[2]

Thus, as for Schleiermacher, theology for Drey is ordered reflection on a particular mode of religious experience. What is true of theology in general is true of Christian theology in particular.

> Christianity is a particular positive religion with a definite content of religious ideas which, once received into the hearts of men, ground there a religious faith. In spite of its practical tendency, this not only permits a pure intellectual concern with its subject matter but, in accord with the necessary direction which religious faith generally takes, reaches a point where a construction of this faith through knowledge becomes a necessity, at least for many. Such a construction of Christian faith with regard to the full extent of its subject matter is Christian theology.[3]

Thus theology is a need within the Church, a need felt "by many," which does for this "particular positive religion," Christianity, what theology does for any Religion: it raises the unreflective to reflection, articulates the inarticulate, clarifies the obscure. It is in service to the community. Drey's "many" who recognize the need for this service are those who are involved in Schleiermacher's "government" of the Church.

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[1] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. 23.

[2] Ibid., p. 24.

[3] Ibid., p. 30.

Because of this positive nature of theology, that is, because it arises out of experiences which are always determined by the cultural development of the subject and their translation into concepts which stand in relation to other systems of concepts expressive of other experiences and perceptions, and because the subject exists in community and both experiences and interprets experiences within the context of an historical community, theology must include in its study the historical communal expression of religious ideas. The externalization of ideas, the forms which Christianity took with its "definite content of religious ideas," the development of those ideas reflected in the developments of their externalizations in doctrine and cult, these must be included in the study of theology scientifically. Church history then is an extremely important discipline within the science of theology. But the very fact of its importance raises a question. There is a history, a development of the expression of the determination of religious feelings which is Christian faith. These expressions change and grow and deepen. They are never fully adequate. The feelings which are the subjective aspect of experiences are raised to ideas and lived out in history but are never perfectly expressed. At a later time one may interpret earlier expressions wrongly. Furthermore, the concerns and culturally determined forms of one stage of development may become so intimately interwoven with religious faith that it becomes difficult to separate them. Faith may be expressed badly, may on occasion be distorted. One cannot simply take the history of Christianity and abstract from it to the ideas which are the content of Christian religion. Historical study is necessary for theology but not sufficient. It cannot by itself assure real knowledge, yet Christian theology is "a construction of this faith through knowledge." Scientific theology must find a way of mediating the ideas of Christian faith and the history of Christian living.

Happily, Drey believes that mediation is provided precisely by the thorough-going attempt to do theology as a science. All science is the holding together of the idea, which cannot be attained by mere abstraction from phenomena but which nevertheless explains them, and the visible, tangible realities, which incompletely embody the idea and yet have intelligible existence only because of the idea. To do theology in a rigorously scientific way is to take full account of both its positive and its ideal aspects. The setting out of the scientific method which Drey adopts is that of Schelling. The Catholic theologian specifically notes in his program for theological students that "various comments, very much to be taken to heart, on a scientific formulation of Christianity and a scientific treatment of theology" are contained in the Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums, especially in the eighth and ninth lectures.[1] Science means the construction of the ideal a priori and the discovery of that ideal in the phenomenal evidence a posteriori.

The combination of a method of rigorous "scientific" knowledge drawn from Schelling with a stance toward theology which views it as essentially positive and arising out of the needs of a community leads Drey to accord the Church a central position in his theological outline.

> The Church is the true basis of all theological knowledge. From it and through it the theologian receives the empirically given material of that knowledge. Through the connection with it, all its concepts first attain reality; without it, they end up in airy, groundless speculation. Within it, knowledge must issue again in practice or else knowledge remains idle, aimless daydreaming. The Church is for the theologian what the state is for the law, what the animal organism is for the science of medicine--the concrete expression of the science itself through which every positive science exists.[2]

The scientific study of law proceeds by the construction of the idea of the state out of the phenomena of the state, which idea is then uncovered in the existing reality of the state. Thus the ideal is demonstrated to be real and the existing reality is shown to be intelligible, not merely the product of historical accidents. The scientific study of medicine constructs the healthily working organism on the basis of the data of existing organisms, and that ideal is then discovered to explain the data. In both spheres, the knowledge of the ideal thus achieved is employed to solve the imperfections of the real existents, in the one case to resolve the inequities of the *de facto* state, in the other to cure malfunctioning organisms. So, in theology, the study of the Church allows the scientific theologian to construct the ideal of Christian faith, to explain the history and present existence of the Church by the unfolding of that idea, and so to move into Church reform, bringing the present Church into accord with the ideal of its faith.

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[1] Ibid., p. 57.

[2] Ibid., p. 33.

> We give an outline of Catholic theology, and it is as follows: the construction of the Christian religious faith through knowledge based upon the Catholic Church and in its spirit, with the goal of working with this knowledge in a way suited to that Church and in accord with the plan of Christianity.[1]

It is the Church which provides the phenomenal material for the ideal construction of Christianity. It is the Church whose history is shown to be the working out of that ideal. It is the Church which is the arena for the *praxis* born of ideal knowledge of Christian scientific theology. All scientific theology is in fact ecclesiology, for the Church is the concretization of Christianity, the ideal having taken on reality, "the concrete expression of the science itself."

For Drey, therefore, the study of theology must be double-pronged.

> The construction of Catholic theology, like all theological construction in general, can be pursued in two distinct ways: in the purely historical through in-

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[1] Ibid.

> vestigation, or in the scientific through construction from ideas.[1]

The classification of theological specializations falls under three broad headings, each with two divisions: historical theology in general, embracing the study of scripture and historical theology in the narrower sense of Church history, scientific theology, embracing apologetics and polemics, and practical theology, which returns to the life of the Church with the scientific knowledge attained by the first two "constructions," embracing Church order and the Church administration. Apologetics is the crucial area. It is the study of the essence of Christianity. Because the Church is the embodiment of Christianity, the study may be conducted by examining Christianity as a pure concept or as a living embodied power. The first approach seeks to answer the question, "What is the essence of the system of Christian religion?", the second the question, "What is the essence of the Christian Church?"[2] Both presume the material which is supplied by biblical and historical studies. Those studies show that the Christian religion is a collection of particular religious ideas and that the Christian Church has a history of particular forms.[3] To answer the questions concerning essence, it is necessary to find the grounding idea beneath all the religious ideas of Christianity, the fundamental doctrine behind all Christian doctrines, and to show that it is the idea embodied in the Church which remains constant in all its historical expressions. This search for the principle which gives unity to the whole system of Christian doctrines and the entire course of Church history is required not only for the fulfillment of the demands of rationality, a need experienced by the theologian, but also for the justification of the claims of Christianity as a religion. For the ground-idea of Christianity is then shown to be the ground-idea behind all religions, but which is fully worked out only in the Christian religion as idea and the Christian Church as fact.[1] This search for unity is apologetics.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 33f.

[2] Ibid., p. 150.

[3] Ibid., p. 151.

This crucial division of theological science is, however, a problem. In fact, as a worked-through, rigorously performed specialization it is impossible. Drey admits that:

> This is the procedure in scientific theology in consequence of its self-concept and in the presumption of a sufficiently objectively worked-out historical theology. But since we do not have such [an historical theology], because in fact only a few attempts have been made toward a biblical theology an ecclesiastical historical theology is nowhere set forth in its fullness and, what is even more significant, the bias of ecclesiastical parties everywhere enters into the historical presentation, scientific theology is required to do the historical ground-

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[1] Ibid., p. 152. For Drey, that universal ground-idea, uniquely complete in Christianity, is the Kingdom of God as the moral order of the world: ibid., p. 176.

> work itself. Thus, up to now, it still can not exist in a pure state.[1]

The sense of this peculiar admission seems to be this: scientific historical theology in the broad sense does not exist. Its two divisions, biblical theology and historical theology in the narrow sense, are both deficient in their presentation up to the point at which Drey is writing, largely because both are thoroughly imbued with confessional positions. Scientific theology is built on the assumption that the data are supplied by the two divisions of historical theology, which assumption has proven false. Those who would engage in scientific theology must therefore turn their energy and attention to the preliminary investigations and thus can not engage in their own pursuits, and so scientific theology is compromised. What Drey is indirectly admitting is the intractability of the visible data. The real, existing, historical Church presents conflicting viewpoints and so conflicting data, the bias of the "ecclesiastical parties" of which Drey writes. The data do not admit to easy coincidence with the explanatory idea which raises them to ideality. Instead they remain stubbornly un-ideal. The method which Drey has pursued throughout does not mediate between the positive Church, which is the basis of all theology and to which the theologian stands in service, and the ideal Church, which is the demand and goal of "scientific" theology. That is the problem which Drey admits when he states that no "pure" scientific theology has existed up to his time.

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[1] Ibid., p. 167.

The familiar dichotomy into which Drey has moved is implicit in the section which immediately follows in the Kurze Einleitung.

> In this examination of particular historically produced concepts within the idea (or ideas) of Christianity, it can not fail that much historical data must be uncovered which do not correspond to the Christian idea to which they should correspond. Such data appear then as malformations in the development of Christianity, and so must be regarded as errors or mistakes and be excluded from the system.[1]

The data which do not correspond to the ideas are simply excluded. They stand in no relationship to the explanatory idea but that of "mistakes." Drey simply regards the recalcitrant data as negative quantities: the real and ideal Churches do not simply coincide. By pursuing the goal of "science" taken over from Schelling's idealist formulation, Drey has moved the dichotomy of the Erlebnistheologie to another level. The gulf between the personally experienced piety which gives power to Christian existence and the visible historical Church has been transplanted into the gulf between the ideal Church which is the product of scientific theology and which gives intelligibility and meaning to the real Church and that real Church itself which is the object of historical theology.[1]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 167f.

In Einheit, Möhler pursues this method taken over from Drey but changes the central category. By taking as his principle the notion of the Church as living organism, Möhler shifts the explanatory element, that which renders the data comprehensible, from idea to life. The effects of that shift, with regard to Drey's problem, can be seen in the treatment of heresy in Einheit: contradictory data stand in an important intrinsic relation to the life of the ecclesial community; they are not merely "errors or mistakes."

When Möhler applies Drey's method to the ante-Nicene sources with which he deals in Einheit, a method which has roots in both Schleiermacher and especially Schelling, he does so in an undogmatic fashion. There are no clearly distinguishable a priori and a posteriori moments in Einheit. It is possible to discern a more constructive approach in the first part of the book, "The Unity of the Spirit of the Church," and a more investigative one in the second part, "The Unity of the Body of the Church." But in fact, both parts are closely tied to the patristic sources which are mentioned in the subtitle of the work. In part this is only to be expected from an author who is, first of all, a Church historian. Throughout this patristic study, Möhler is concerned with his evidence. But it is also due to the shift from the idea to life as the organizing category. Möhler's Church can never be ideal, in the sense of an intellectual construct. It is a living organism and must be studied as embodied.

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[1] I do not mean to imply that Drey was unaware of that problem or that he regarded it as solved by simply discarding the troublesome data. Indeed, his admission that "up to now, [scientific theology] still can not exist in a pure state" indicates that he did not regard such a course as a real solution, that, in fact, at that point he did not have a real solution. The movement of Drey's thought on this separation between the real and the ideal Churches can be observed in the decisive step forward taken in his review of J. G. Rätze's book, Das Suchen nach Wahrheit oder Vergleichung der katholischen und protestanten Kirche mit der apostolischen der ersten Jahrhunderte, in Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 450-484. (One should note especially J. R. Geiselmann's demonstration that Drey was the reviewer, not Möhler as Eschweiler and others had maintained, "Johann Adam Möhler und die Entwicklung seines Kirchenbegriffs," Theologische Quartalschrift 113 (1931): 27-40.) Here Drey places the emphasis on the Church as the concretization of theology; the visible existing Church is objective and therefore the standard of intelligibility, not the ideal Church which is the product of speculation.

This is not to say, however, that Möhler's ecclesiological concerns are completely determined by the ante-Nicene Fathers. He approaches his material with definite questions and a predetermined plan of organization. This is readily observed in the three points which he makes very briefly in the Introduction. The first has to do with the ground plan of the book.

> It begins with the Holy Spirit; it may appear peculiar that I did not rather begin with Christ, the center of our faith. I could, of course have first recounted that Christ is the Son of God sent by the Father, that he became our redeemer and teacher, promised the Holy Spirit and has fulfilled his promise. Instead, I wanted not to take up what was reasonably presumed as known, but rather to begin with what plainly belongs to the matter at hand. The Father sent the Son, and he the Spirit; so

> God came to us; in the reverse order we go to him: the Holy Spirit leads us to the Son, and he to the Father. I wanted to begin with what is the first in time in our process of becoming Christian.[1]

Möhler makes no claim to be following a chronological plan in treating the Fathers' theology of the Church. Nor is he following a topical order dictated by his sources. Rather, he seeks the steps in the "process of becoming Christian." But if the patristic data do not determine the plan of the book, neither does an a priori idea of the Church. Möhler wishes to uncover a process, not an idea, in his sources.

His second word of explanation to his reader deals with the data he will take into account.

> The title announces that the subject of my writing should not be pursued beyond the limits of the first three centuries. From this one would expect that no data, testimonies, etc. are taken from a later time, and that is correct, although it would not be if one meant by it that the whole development of the Church was completed within that time. But, in fact, I do occasionally introduce statements from later Fathers of the Church. One will find, however, that this occurs very seldom and also that nothing new is added thereby. I have done it by way of reflection, in which case I could just as well have introduced more recent writers. More often it has happened in the appendices, which I have added on to the work in order to further clarify particular points, because here I have not intended to confine myself within the bounds of the first three centuries.[2]

Two elements should be noted. The ante-Nicene Church does not exhaust the Church's development. That statement represents a definite break with the "classicist" motif of

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 3.

[2] Ibid.

Catholic theology which had marked the Catholic enlightenment. "If Möhler wants to formulate the essence of Catholicism out of the exposition of ecclesiastical unity in the first three centuries, this confinement to the first period of ecclesiastical life is pursued by Möhler in no way arbitrarily. Rather, this limitation must be understood as having the weight of an axiom. The young Tübinger follows in this an accepted fundamental of the theology of his time."[1] But Möhler accepts the limitation while denying the exclusivity of the period. That is the more striking in that the ecclesiology of his 1823/24 articles and reviews seemed to accept the full weight of the classicist principle. The Katerkamp review of 1823 had contrasted the "beautiful simplicity" of the liturgy of the early Church, which Möhler claimed was the reflection of its deep interior religious life, with the liturgical changes of subsequent periods which indicated "the weakened inner life and the often shallow religiosity" of those times. "So the one [period] illuminates the other, and the reader is likewise placed in the position to evaluate his time and to see without confusion what must be done in it."[2] But now the "classical" period is not the measure by which later ages are judged, but the seed-bed out of which the latter develop. Consequently later developments are in continuity with earlier positions. This is the second element to be noted. Möhler regards himself as free to cite later Fathers in order to clarify earlier patristic statements, for the later are in accord with the earlier and have grown out of them. Thus once again he is uncovering a process, and in doing so he interprets the patristic sources in the light of what subsequently is seen to unite them.

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[1] Geiselmann, Theologische Quartalschrift 113 (1931): 15.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 487.

The third caution to the reader of Einheit with which Möhler closes the Introduction is a request to read the book in the way in which it was written.

> Those who take on themselves the labor of judging my work in public I ask to give grounds to their judgment and not to want simply to air their views. I too have not just discoursed, but have supported everything with reasons. But more than anything else I would be concerned lest someone, setting aside the main point, get wrapped up in the incidentals, or if my individual statements, judgments and opinions were emphasized purely by themselves and were viewed outside their context. Thus they could appear peculiar, difficult or foolish. Each and every one stands in an intimate bond with the whole, or at least so I believe. Consequently all must be viewed and grasped only in this interconnection.[1]

This is not merely an author's plea to be read sympathetically. Möhler's treatment of each point, of each Father, of each source, he maintains, can only be properly understood when it is seen in the context of the whole book. The totality will explain the parts. The full understanding of the ecclesiology presented will justify the particular in-

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 3f.

terpretations. In describing an organism, the particulars can be understood only in light of the whole.
Möhler's method may be investigative but it is an investigation which is justified and explained only by the ecclesiology which emerges from it. Einheit is a patristic study, but one which is conducted in order to display, as the subtitle expresses it, "the principle of Catholicism in the spirit of the Fathers of the Church of the first three centuries" (emphasis mine).

The first step in introducing the principle of the community as organism, which is to resolve the two dichotomies with which Möhler is confronted, that between personal religious experience and Church and that between internal ecclesial life and external office and form, is a criticism of the type of ecclesiology which was espoused in his own publications of the previous two years. Möhler had criticized the externally realized, hierarchically centered ecclesiology of Katerkamp, an ecclesiology in the mainstream of Catholic thinking about the Church since Trent and, in its basic positions, one not very different from that which he himself had taught in his canon law lectures, as being "naturalistic" and only "half-religious."[1] By removing the activity of God from the world it veered toward deism. But simply to transfer the center of Church life from the hierarchy to the Spirit does not solve the problem. By emphasizing the Spirit, who may choose king or pope or local bishop or any member of the congregation to be his spokesman, the Spirit's work is made too uncertain and transient. One must emphasize Spirit and community, or else the effect of deism, the occasional quality of divine activity, is not overcome.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 497.

> As in the pre-Christian time the Spirit, who forms the totality of the faithful, enlivens it and holds it together, descended on individuals here and there, as it were only fitfully and disjointedly, for which reason also no common spiritual religious life could be formed but instead everything disintegrated into uniqueness and particularity, so now, after the great and wonderful descent upon the apostles and the whole Christian community, which actually begins with this in truth and in life, this same divine Spirit should never again depart from the faithful, nevermore ought he to come to them, but always be there.[1]

The constancy of the Spirit's presence, the unbroken continuity of his activity, is the true antithesis to deism. One should not speak of the Spirit's presence in this or that person, but rather of his presence in the community. Thus, rather than talk of the presence of the Spirit in this individual, one must talk of the participation of this individual in the Church.

The guarantee of the constancy of the Spirit is the continuity of the community. Here is the point at which the organic community becomes so important in Möhler's scheme of ecclesiology. The present community must be continuous with the Pentecost community. It must be both prolonged through time and so accountable to history, and still be radically one with its beginning. The organic unfolding of life is Möhler's means of maintaining continuity. The initiation of the communal organism is unique, an experience never to be repeated; the Spirit need never come again because he is always there from that point on.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 8.

> The continuous existence of the divine Spirit among men had thus begun with the apostles, who received him immediately. He had deeply touched and permeated those who were open and active in their openness, and imparted to them a new principle of life, which, wherever openness to it is present, should be further imparted by them, so that no one may receive this same life-principle immediately as they did, but rather that in the new life developed within them, a similar life should be generated in others. As the life of corporal man came only once from the hand of the Creator, and where corporal life is is now to develop it does so through the life-force of an already living being, so the new divine life is to be an emanation from the already enlivened, its generation should be an "engendering-into."[1] Only where the apostles lived and worked did the new life break forth. As in their time those separated from one another in space received the same Spirit only through the mediation of life proceeding immediately from those sent by the Lord, so those separated from them in time receive it by means of the members who became participants in it through them, so that all the intervening generations merely form reproductive stages, and the latest generations, like those most removed from one another spatially, are enlivened by one and the same Spirit, express one community, form themselves into one communal life, and make up one Church.[2]

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[1] This is a play on words which cannot be translated: "die Erzeugung desselben sollte eine Über-Zeugung sein." *Zeugung* is the act of begetting; *Überzeugung* is the act of convincing or converting.

[2] Möhler, *Einheit*, pp. 10f.

The organism which lives the life of the divine Spirit operates according to the same laws which govern the organism which lives the life of the human spirit. Separated from the organism, the individual will not be part of its life.

The use of Möhler's principle of organic community with regard to the separation between the experience of the individual Christian and the community of the Church becomes clear. The individual's experience of the Spirit's life is impossible apart from the community. The Christian is touched by the Spirit only because and to the degree that he is a member of the community and lives the life of the community. The primary *locus* of the Spirit is the community, not the individual.

Thus the religious experience which gives rise to Christian faith is available only through the community. That religious experience is divine life which is the product of the Holy Spirit working in the Church. Faith arises from a particular experience which is an apprehension of life. That life is available only in the community of believers. This is the resolution of Sailer's *Erlebnistheologie*: experience is indeed essential for the personal faith of the Christian, but, far from dispensing with the Church and its common rites and doctrines, it is possible only within that communal framework. The experience is not a matter of *Wissen*, but of *Erkenntnis*, which Möhler equates with faith.[1] It is an apprehension of life which is identical with communal love. This expansion of the realm of the Spirit and of the Christian's experience, which is the work of the Spirit, from the individual to the community is concisely expressed in the final section of the first chapter of Einheit. Möhler sums up in one statement concerning the unifying principle of the Church, and three corollaries of that statement: "It arises through an immediate life which is always activated through the Holy Spirit and which maintains and propagates itself through loving reciprocity among the faithful."[2] The category of life rather than idea will allow Möhler to escape, in the second part of his book, the inner-outer dichotomy which is the "scientific" (in the sense of Schelling and Drey) counterpart of the personal experience—Church community dichotomy.[3] That life, which is the communal love generating the Church and the source of faith, is the product of the Holy Spirit. The ecclesiology which resolves the problem of the Erlebnistheologie is pneumatocentric. The intrinsic connection of faith, which arises from communal life, and love, which creates communal life, is Möhler's first corollary.

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[1] Ibid., p. 21: "Der Glaube oder die christliche Erkenntnis. . . ."

[2] Ibid.

[3] In his first short draft of Einheit, Möhler specifically adds, in this summary statement, that Christianity

> Faith, or christian apprehension, and love which generates the community of believers are absolutely posited with one another. Where faith has developed through the mediation of the Holy Spirit there the same unifying divine force is revealed, and where this is found, there the same faith is given.[1]

Christian apprehension, the personal religious experience which makes the spiritual life of the Christian vital and powerful, and the bond of unity within the Church community are one and the same.

The second corollary depends on Möhler's explanation in the Introduction that he has chosen to follow an order quoad nos: the Spirit leads to the Son, who leads to the Father. It is the Church, united by the Spirit, which leads to the Son, for it is the Son's creation in which he has poured forth the Spirit. As there is no longer a separation between personal piety and ecclesial community, so there is no gulf between the Christ within us and the Christ who founded the historical Church.

> As historically we experience nothing of Christ apart from the Church, so too we experience him in ourselves only because of and within the Church. And the more we accept within ourselves the divine life streaming into the Church, the more alive the community of the faithful becomes in us, the more intimately we live in it and it lives in us, to that degree faith in Christ and accordingly in what he is and should be for us is seen to be more lively within us. Through him the community has been formed, through him the division which existed among men has been overcome, through him

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is grounded "auf ein . . . Leben, nicht im Begriff": ibid., p. 350.

[1] Ibid., p. 21.

> love in the Holy Spirit has been poured into our hearts. How could we come more completely to the conscious acceptance of the community of the faithful within us, his most characteristic work?[1]

This second corollary in the summary of his first chapter is marked by Möhler as "of particular note." Indeed it is. Möhler took care with its formulation. The text of Einheit exists in several forms. There is a brief first draft in Möhler's own hand. The second autograph is reworked and greatly expanded. A copy was made of this second text in another hand, which was presumably intended for the printer, and which makes very slight verbal changes in the second autograph. To this copy Möhler added several very important sections and made significant alterations in his own hand. This then became the printed text.[2] The passage quoted appears in its present form for the first time in the corrections made by Möhler in the copy intended for the printer. In his second manuscript it had appeared in this form:

> Of particular note: within and because of living ecclesiastical union Christ is communicated to the living consciousness of the Christian as the creative strength of the new life given to him. Therefore together with this unity the living Christ disappears. To destroy ecclesiastical unity is thus tantamount to taking away living faith in Christ. We know of no

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[1] Ibid., pp. 21f.

[2] For the history of the text of Einheit and a careful analysis of the alterations, additions, and deletions, we are indebted to the masterful critical work of J. R. Geiselmann, ibid., pp. 319-535.

> Christ whom we have manufactured by ourselves in isolation; we receive him only from the Church.[1]

With only minor grammatical changes both versions conclude:

> Furthermore, since Christ is given to the faithful immediately in lived experience, he has become their life and is inseparable from it. Their Christian life is one with the life of the Church from which it has flowed into them and is therefore inseparable from it.[2]

Möhler's point is this: the Spirit sent by Christ awakens the love of those to whom he is sent and this love forms and supports the community of the Church. The experience of that communal love, which is what makes the community exist and is therefore its life, is the ground of faith. Faith is the apprehension (Erkenntnis) of the experience of that communal life. That apprehension, that coming to consciousness of the life of the Church, the work of the Spirit, is the believer's encounter with Christ.

A significant word appears when Möhler summarizes this first and very important chapter on "Mystical Unity"--Bewusstsein, "consciousness," used as an equivalent of Erkenntnis. Its meaning is clarified by noting the very interesting conclusion given this section in the short original draft of Einheit.

> This faith understood as life becomes for them [the faithful] a necessity, so wrapped up with their being, so permeating their souls and spreading through their existences, that in it their innermost being first

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[1] Ibid., p. 410.

[2] Ibid., p. 22; cf. p. 410.

> comes to full consciousness. Faith in Jesus is for them the highest level of self-consciousness. In him they have first learned to know God and consequently themselves.[1] Self-consciousness is life and so the highest life is faith in Jesus.[2]

This passage which appears only in the first sketch for Einheit and is omitted from the subsequent expansions is most instructive. Faith arises out of a new life-principle; it is the coming to consciousness of that life-principle. But that process of coming to consciousness is a matter first of apprehension, not of conceptualization. What is apprehended is life, not a concept.[3] The apprehension is a pre-reflective grasp of the experience of life, i.e., of one's own existence. This pre-reflective self-awareness is one meaning of human consciousness. "Generally speaking. our consciousness has a double aspect: the intuitive, reflective aspect and the intuited, experiencing, living aspect. The latter provides material to the former. So it is also with Christian consciousness."[4] The life, the experience, which is apprehended is also described as feeling, Gemüt. But because Christian consciousness is a particular type or modification of consciousness, it is to be anticipated that the feeling out of which it emerges is also a particular type of feeling. Möhler describes it as "blessed" or "consecrated."[1] Because this blessed feeling, this life which is the communal love generated by the Spirit, a life given immediately only at Pentecost and now mediated through the community, is indeed the existence, the way of being of the Christian, his awareness, his pre-reflective grasp of it will indeed be the "highest level of self-consciousness." And because that life is the working of the Spirit sent by Christ, because it is a mode of existence made possible only through him, the "new creator" of new life, Christian self-consciousness is consciousness of Christ. Möhler has entered upon a line of thought associated with Schleiermacher, a Bewusstseinstheologie, a theology constructed on the basis of a unique orientation of consciousness.

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[1] Möhler has written "er" rather than "sie," which is impossible both in sense and grammar.

[2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 351.

[3] Ibid., p. 350.

[4] Ibid., p. 64.

The Panentheist framework

The Presence of Schleiermacher in Einheit

The influence of the great Reformed theologian on Möhler's attempt to reconcile the dichotomies confronting Catholic ecclesiology in Einheit in der Kirche seems minimal if it is to be gauged by the number of direct references in the text. The issues upon which Möhler chose to discuss

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[1] Ibid., p. 12: "aus dem geheiligten Gemüte die christliche Erkenntnis entwickeln."

Schleiermacher, however, represented key elements in his attempt to mediate between the religious life of the individual and the given of the Church and subsequently between the interior life of the religious community and its institutional form.

In Möhler's first sketch, Schleiermacher is mentioned once, as a Protestant theologian who has recognized the need for a continuing presence of the Spirit in the community as the basis for faith rather than sola scriptura.

> If the Reformers say that [the body of Christian doctrine] rests upon the Bible, then they say rightly, but they say so precisely because they were educated in the doctrine and the tradition and thus come to the Bible with the spirit of Christianity. We claim, however, that without this spirit they would not have found (accepted) what they found. Indeed, the longer the Church founded by the Reformers has existed and continued in that basic tenet and "by the Bible alone" has been divorced from those guidelines, so much the more have those things been impugned which they had still accepted as being in accord with the Bible, until finally everything is again rejected, the point at which one has been forced again to return to ecclesiastical tradition, as now Schleiermacher, Marheinecke [sic] and Theremin have done. It is clearly demonstrable that the Reformers completely misunderstood what tradition is if one notices what they term traditiones in the Augsburg Confession.[1]

Two points are of interest. First, Schleiermacher is connected with a revived recognition of the central role of tradition in the life of individual believers. The Christian comes to the acceptance of the truth of faith not by scripture alone or even first, but by "the Christian spirit" in which and through which scripture is read. This "spirit" is the communal life which is the objective pole of Christian consciousness. The experience of this life uncovered in self-consciousness is faith. This is the true meaning of tradition, not to be confused with the use of the term to designate customs of practice and piety, the meaning intended in the Augsburg Confession. It is to this far richer use that Schleiermacher and other contemporary Protestant writers had returned. Second, that return is the measure of the distance between the best Protestant theologians of his day and the Reformers. Möhler believes Schleiermacher, Marheineke and Theremin have, whether or not they realize it, returned to the Catholic understanding of tradition. Thus, on this very central issue, Schleiermacher is worthy of notice. Möhler has implicitly claimed him for his own view.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 385f. Franz Theremin (1780-1846) had published his principal work, Die Lehre vom Gottesreich, two years before Einheit in der Kirche.

This explicit mention of Schleiermacher never found its way into the final text. And it does link him with Marheineke who very deliberately distinguished himself from his Berlin colleague by his enthusiastic espousal of Hegel. Thus, by itself, this text indicates nothing more than a collective reference to prominent contemporaries on the other side of the confessional divide whose work had led them to positions similar to Möhler's. But it is not alone. In the text prepared for the printer which Möhler substantially revised, Schleiermacher is mentioned in a footnote. Möhler writes that Origen sometimes describes the power of Christ to effect a new principle of life as the proof of his divinity. The text cited in the accompanying note is the Adversus Celsum I, 47, referring to Jesus Christ "of whose divinity so many churches are witnesses which consist of people converted from a torrent of sins, who are dependent upon the Creator and who refer all their actions to his good pleasure."[1] Möhler comments, "Thus Schleiermacher has characterized the essence of Catholicism very well in his Dogmatics and agrees almost verbally with this statement of Origen."[2] This can only refer to the well-known proposition in the Glaubenslehre: "One may formulate the contrast provisionally as follows, that Protestantism makes the connection of the individual with the Church dependent upon his connection with Christ, while Catholicism on the other hand makes the connection of the individual with Christ dependent upon his connection with the Church."[3] In the final text the quotation from Origen was retained but the comment about Schleiermacher has been dropped. It is noteworthy, however, that Möhler believes that his Reformed contemporary in Berlin had understood what the central element of Catholic Christianity is. That central element, the emphasis placed on the individual's "connection with the Church," is equated with a common experience of moral conversion and utter dependence upon God expressed in creation and in providence. This experience testifies, according to Möhler, basing himself on the authority of Origen, to the divinity of Christ. This is what it means to say that the relation between Christ and the Christian is determined by the relation of the Christian to the Church.

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[1] Ibid., p. 16, n. 10.

[2] Ibid., p. 405.

[3] Friedrich Schleiermacher, Die christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt (Berlin, 1821-1822), 1:137f (hereafter cited as Glaubenslehre, 1st ed.).

Two observations may be made. Möhler may accept Schleiermacher's formulation of the essence of Catholicism, but in fact he reinterprets it considerably. What the Catholic believer discovers in the Church is not the authoritative expositor of revelation nor the guardian of correct sacramental celebration nor the pastoral governance instituted by Christ. It is not the individual's connection with the hierarchy established in succession to the apostles nor his acceptance of the body of infallible doctrinal and moral truths which is finally important. Rather it is the individual's experience of "the power of Christ fashioning a new life"[1] which is the decisive relationship between the believer and the Church. This is the necessary factor in the discovery of one's relationship with Christ himself.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 16.

Without this one cannot come to the personal appropriation of the Redeemer's place in one's life, i.e., the full recognition of his divinity. Second, this way of understanding Schleiermacher's statement that the distinguishing characteristic of Catholicism is the dependence of the individual's relationship to Christ upon his relationship to the Church must end by making Schleiermacher's Protestantism the other side of the coin of Möhler's Catholicism. Schleiermacher had written that the communal life of redeemed humanity is conditioned by the reception of each individual into a community of life with Christ which is effected by divine justification.[1] Mohler argues that this entry into the life of Christ is admission into the life of the Church community. The contrast between Protestantism and Catholicism formulated in the Glaubenslehre is transmuted into a complementarity.

In the final text of Einheit in der Kirche, Schleiermacher's name appears only in a note to the penultimate section of the first chapter. Möhler is comparing the communication of the new life-principle of Christianity by participation in the community of believers, the new birth in the Spirit, to the communication of original sin by birth into the family of man. He demonstrates that this comparison is of patristic origin by referring to several statements in Tertullian's De anima. Then he adds: "And so Tertullian definitely compares the tradux spiritus with the tradux peccati; in several Fathers of the later period and also in modern authors this comparison becomes still more prominent."[1] The modern author whom Möhler singles out as an example of one who has dealt with solidarity in sin through participation in the human community as comparable to solidarity in the life of the Spirit through participation in the Christian community is Schleiermacher.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:387.

Möhler has called upon Theophilus of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria in support of his contention that polytheism grew out of moral depravity. Religious knowledge is religious life raised to the level of reflection. Consequently, if religious life is impoverished, religious knowledge is distorted. "Now man directed his gaze ever earthward and, because he could not live without any God, he fashioned his gods according to his own disposition, thus earthly gods."[2] The experience of religious life, however, is the experience of community. The community in which the individual lives determines the form of his experience which, in turn, decides the conceptualization of his religion reflected in dogma and ritual. The collapse of the ethical life of the community debases the individual's experience and so beclouds his religious consciousness issuing in superstition and idolatry.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 21.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

> As sin was communicated through the pagan community together with all the influences deriving from it, under which false conceptions of God and religious error generally arise, so the true perception is communicated through life in the holy Christian Church, the former being dependent on the latter, and both then develop mutually. As in the first the ethical defectiveness and moral death of each individual as well as of every generation is inherited immediately from the preceding age, so that, working backwards, this can be traced to the sin of the first man, so the reception of the Christian life-principle in a particular age and by each individual is conditioned by its connection with and derivation from all former Christian generations going back to Christ. As then whoever could have avoided taking his origin from earlier generations would have inherited no destructive spiritual influence, so now whoever does not spiritually derive from the uninterrupted line of the Christian Church, whether consciously or unconsciously, does not possess the sonship of God. As previously whoever had assimilated an impoverishment and negation of life through his having been placed in the sinful mass, so whoever is now located within the life of the holy Church becomes a participant in the most fully realized of all lives. As once man was placed in the slavery of sin through his physical birth, so now through the spiritual birth of the Church he is set in the freedom of the children of God.[1]

The passage in the Glaubenslehre to which Möhler refers in support of this analogy of solidarity in sin to solidarity in grace is that in explanation of proposition 109: "The conquest of sinful misery is traced back within the consciousness of the Christian to the perfect sinlessness and absolute perfection actually present in Christ and communicated by him."[2] If one accepts Schleiermacher's own description of Catholicism as that view of Christianity which makes one's relation to Christ dependent upon one's relation to the Church, then at no point in the Glaubenslehre does he appear more thoroughly Catholic. For the way in which Christ's sinless perfection is communicated is through the Church. Schleiermacher admits that this is difficult to demonstrate because no one member of the community originating from Christ exemplifies this sinlessness beside Christ himself. Indeed, it may well be objected that the whole community exemplifies this perfection badly, that its history gives ample evidence of its being enmeshed in the sinful course of history surrounding the new life of Christ. Schleiermacher gives his answer most clearly in the second edition of his great work, published five years after Einheit in der Kirche. Almost a decade after he had admitted the strength of the objections to his position in the first edition, he still replies that "against these objections brought forward with much plausibility by its opponents faith alone can prevail."[1] It must be assumed, Schleiermacher insists, that the appearance of sinfulness within the community, like its appearance within the individual member of that community, indicates not the corruption of the new sinless life of Christ but rather the as yet restricted presence of that life within the community, its failure to permeate every aspect of its life. This must be assumed, because the community must be maintained as the channel by which the new life flows to the present-day believer. There is no other channel by which the Christian of the present can come into contact with Christ. To all of this the Catholic professor of Church history in Tübingen could only say, 'Bravo'.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 19f.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:162.

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[1] Friedrich Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, 2nd ed., trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1928), p. 364 (hereafter cited as Glaubenslehre, 2nd ed. trans.).

There is another reference to Schleiermacher, without specific mention of his name, in a note to section 9, early in the second chapter. In this chapter Möhler treats the ways in which the pre-reflective Christian self-consciousness, the "mystical unity" of the first chapter, has been reflectively expressed and transmitted in a "rational unity," and the relationship of those ways, tradition and scripture, to one another. In arguing that tradition, understood as the now conscious grasp of the life-principle of the community, is prior to scripture, he states that the Church is not grounded in the dead letter of the Bible but in the new man, enlivened by the life of the Spirit, a genuinely new creation. In a note, after quoting Clement of Alexandria in support of his statement in the text, he writes: "In this lofty view of the value of the Christian one may look for the reason that several Fathers of the Church developed the division of man into spirit, soul, and body, and had the Spirit, the pneuma, which was lost through sin, be given again to man in Christianity." For this opinion he refers the reader to Tatian and Irenaeus, but then adds:

> It is a very beautiful thought of a great theologian of our time that in the imparting of the Holy Spirit through Christianity the creation of man has, as if for the first time, been perfected. But the doctrine of the Fathers is more correct, which grants that man was perfected at the beginning, but, through sin, fell from perfection. Furthermore, there is no actual talk of a fall and redemption from the fall, etc.[1]

There is no doubt that the "great theologian" is Schleiermacher. Möhler's reference is to his attribution to Christ of the appearance of a new spiritual principle which raises man to a higher level which is complementary to man's original creation. The appearance of Christ is a new step in the development of humanity. Schleiermacher had written that

> if this being of God developed in the Redeemer in time and in accord with human nature, since spiritual faculties only gradually appear, but if, by the same token, as this particular man, he had to be free from the very beginning from every influence of previous generations which was destructive of interior God-consciousness and promotive of sin, then his human existence has to be traceable to an original event in human nature rather than to empirical parentage without thereby denying his complete humanity. And herein lies his special analogy to the first man for whom there was no previous parentage without his therefore being any less human. As the appearance of the first man initially constituted the life of humanity, likewise the appearance of the Redeemer initially constituted the new life which was produced and matured through that heightened in-dwelling of the supreme Being in him in the manner of a spiritual begetting. He is consequently its progenitor as the other is of the former natural life. And as in the first man, his coming into being, with which the appearance of human nature first occurred, and his immediate emergence

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[1] Ibid., p. 27.

> from the divine creative activity were one and the same, so too in the Redeemer both his pure origin freed from the influence of natural parentage and the being of God in him which proved itself a creative force are the same. Here, consequently, two insights coincide, that arising out of our common self-consciousness which required a redemption and that of a perfect creation of human nature, dependent on the recognition that for God sin does not exist. The impartation of the Spirit to the human race realized in the first Adam was incomplete, so that the Spirit remained sunk in sensuousness and scarcely for a moment gazed forward in presentiment of a better state; but in the second Adam the creative work is perfected through the abovementioned second, yet at the same time original, impartation, which, if nothing of God in and for himself can be periodically parcelled out, is together with the first but one and the same external and undivided decree, and so also, in a higher sense, forms with the first creation one and the same continuity of nature, but unattainable by us, and which, because of this unattainability by our understanding remains a miracle just as surely as for our self-consciousness the lack of perfection of the first process is sin and the beginning of the second is redemption.[1]

As Möhler remarks, there is little room for the doctrine of the fall here. Evil seems to be the result of the Spirit's being "sunk in sensuousness" which is the imperfection of the original creation. Redemption is a moment in the development of man simply as man. For the present, Möhler's concern with this appears very slight--merely the statement that the patristic doctrine is "more correct." This is the first faint sounding of a note which became a principal theme in his work. Gradually, in the years immediately following the publication of Einheit, the uneasiness which he registers here about Schleiermacher's making the incarnation the necessary condition for the fulfillment of the human as human, became a major problem for him. This concern played an important role in the ecclesiological shift which is reflected in Symbolik.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:197f.

By a count of explicit references, then, the great Protestant Church father does not appear to be a major influence on Möhler's Einheit. But while the number of direct citations may be very few, the presence of Schleiermacher is pervasive. Möhler's contemporaries, both Catholic and Protestant, recognized that presence and accepted it as an established fact that he had been heavily influenced by the Berlin theologian. Johann Heinrich Pabst, a close disciple of Anton Günther's at Vienna, coupled Möhler's name with Schleiermacher as one who had gone off on the route of a "rash philosophy of nature in order to come to the understanding of the essence of the Church,"[1] although Möhler had managed to keep that rash philosophy in service to theology, while Schleiermacher, a more extreme case, had simply let Christian theology disappear into philosophy.[2] Ferdinand Christian Baur, in his attack on Möhler's Symbolik, wrote that he had noticed many Catholic writers taking over positions which should correctly be regarded as distinctively Protestant, especially with regard to the true meaning of tradition: "In publications such as those of our author himself on the unity of the Church, Schleiermacher's ideas have had an unmistakable influence."[1] There is clearly much that parallels Schleiermacher in Möhler's attempt to trace the individual's experience of the Spirit to the communal life of the Church. This is especially clear in the summary section of the first chapter of Einheit in der Kirche. Möhler underpins the Erlebnistheologie with an analysis of religious experience and combines it with an understanding of community which leads him to a position in which he speaks the language of Bewusstseinstheologie. This substructure of thought can be uncovered throughout the crucial first chapter, indeed throughout the whole book. But is it anywhere brought to the surface? If so, then it is there that the "unmistakable influence" of Schleiermacher will be most apparent.

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[1] Der Mensch und seiner Geschichte. Ein Beitrag zur Philosophie des Christhenthums, 2nd ed. (Vienna, 1847), p. 90.

[2] Ibid., pp. 194f.: "While he appears to maintain the facticity and miraculous nature of Christianity, they are so completely attenuated that perhaps no one (and this is saying a great deal) in history has proved such a wolf in sheep's clothing as this man, in this--the teaching of "the Christian faith."

The Panentheist principle

This forthright statement of the underlying basis of Einheit in der Kirche is found in section 31. Möhler added this section to the text initially prepared for the printer. It was the last complete section written.

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[1] Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus nach den Principien und Hauptdogmen bei beiden Lehrbegriffe mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Hrn. D. Möhlers Symbolik (Tübingen, 1834), p. 436. It is typical of the debate between Baur and Möhler that the former could accuse his opponent of quietly appropriating the Protestant understanding of tradition, while the latter could observe that many of the best among his Protestant contemporaries had rediscovered the Catholic meaning of tradition. Cf. Möhler, Einheit, p. 386.

It is a remarkable argument which might be termed an ontological demonstration of the theological position presented in the first chapter. Despite its considerable length compared to the other sections into which the text is divided, Möhler appeals only twice to patristic sources, to Augustine and Optatus of Milevis, and then only incidentally. He had the completed text of his book before him when he wrote this additional section. It is here that he exposes the structure which underpins the whole of Einheit, as he himself proclaims at the outset: "We are attempting to give our position an even deeper foundation, which we may perhaps succeed in doing through a comparative examination of a universally acknowledged truth and through an expansion of our view to include our whole situation.[1]

The "universally acknowledged truth" is that man finds himself part of a great whole, of the universe, and that he must so understand himself and so conduct himself. It is this realization, writes Möhler, which in academic circles (die Schule, as he puts it) is termed "being one with the universe," "the harmony of individual life with universal life." Parenthetically he gives an example of the academic circle he means by referring to Franz Josef Seber.[1] Drey had favorably reviewed the major work of this philosopher of religion a year prior to the publication of Einheit in der Kirche.[2] Seber, as Drey noted, was strongly influenced by Schelling's Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums in his attempt to ground the study of theology.[3] Seber rejected any notion of "natural religion" if that means religion without revelation. Every religion is revealed religion, but the fundamental revelation is nature itself. Religion springs from man's attempt to appropriate reflectively the directedness of his own and all other creatures' existence. The ideal conception of humanity and, because it is ideal, the presumably original self-understanding of man is that of being one with God uncovered through dependency upon him. The discrepancy between that ideal conception and the actuality of human existence points to the truth enclosed in the traditional Christian doctrine of the fall of man. We understand who we are as rational beings and as individuals to the extent that we are aware of and accept our relatedness to the whole of creation and to God. To the extent that we deny that relatedness we are fallen and sinful.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

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[1] The particular reference is to Ueber Religion und Theologie. Eine allgemeine Grundlage der Christlichen Theologie (Cologne, 1823), sections 8-16.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 6 (1824): 452-464.

[3] In the obituary notice for Seber (Theologische Quartalschrift 9 [1827]: 774-780) mention is again made of his debt to Schelling and to Benedikt Zimmer, who was also an admirer of the early Schelling. Eschweiler notes that Seber owed a great deal to the Schleiermacher of the Reden über die Religion, Joh. Adam Möhlers Kirchenbegriff, p. 45.

There is small wonder that Drey would favorably review a book espousing such positions. Möhler scarcely needed to look abroad from Tübingen for a Catholic example of the "universally acknowledged truth." In his 1819 schema of the structure of theological studies Drey had given a remarkably succinct definition of revelation as God's "expression of his nature in something other which is not God and, to that extent, outside him."[2] All which is and is not God is the universe. Thus all divine revelation not only takes place in the universe, it necessarily is the universe. Within the universe a distinction can be made between two types of existents, man and nature. Because nothing can be revealed to man "except in him or in nature, nothing which is not rooted in his or its relationship to God," the universe is both the only possible and "the perfectly realized, entirely sufficient" revelation.[3] The content of this revelation is the being of everything which is and the relationships among all finite existents and between finite reality and God. The forms of being and the laws of relationships which develop within the universe are the forms of revelation. To be fully in accord with the universe, to grasp oneself as part of the whole of finite reality, to affirm the network of relations, the subtle web of causes and effects, which unite each with all, is to receive the fullness of God's self-revelation _if_ one comprehends this oneness with the universe as revelation, i.e., if one views the universe "purely as _revelation_, purely as the work and domain of God." The form which the religious drive within the human being takes must be the acknowledgment that everything is related to God.

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[1] Seber, Ueber Religion und Theologie, pp. 24-28.

[2] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie. p. 10.

[3] Ibid.

> This same affiliation with a higher reality (external power) which is revealed in the life of earthly existents he experiences within himself as a drive toward and demand for a freely willed subordination. This assimilation to a consistent order and interaction of all individual existents through the eternal intelligence proclaims itself in him as a drive toward a harmonious incorporation in that ordered whole. And that universal attraction of nature appears in man as the force of life in the direction of that eternal love which first poured itself forth into existents.[1]

But there is the disparity between the ideal working of this religious "drive" in human life and the actual experience of humanity. Seber pointed to this as the meaning of "original sin," and Drey had been no less concerned about it. The act by which "man becomes master of his ego and his egoism" is also the occasion for the possibility of withdrawal from connectedness, from the recognition of the universe as revelation. The individual can set his own will "over and against the will of God proclaimed in relationships in the universe."[1] Self-appropriation arises with self-determination which gives the individual the possibility of affirming or rejecting his oneness with the universe. To refuse one's place in the causal nexus, to elevate oneself above the universe, to exalt the individual will above the relationships within the universe, is at the same time to distort and eventually lose sight of the relationship between the universe as a whole and its creator. The individual will strives to subject nature to itself, making the universe a means to its own ends. But nature cannot serve two masters. Because creation exists in service to the divine will, the finite will which seeks to bend nature to itself must experience it as an obstacle to be overcome. Thus, far from being one with the universe, man is pitted against nature. Humanity can no longer recognize the revelation of God in the universe, for the universe is an adversary.

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[1] Ibid., p. 6.

The truth of this was, if not universally, at least generally acknowledged by many of Möhler's contemporaries, especially in Tübingen where Drey made it the foundation for his treatment of the meaning of religion in his method for theology. Möhler himself now moves this principle to the specifically religious level.

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

> This being one with the universe is likewise the true being-in-God, the condition for true knowledge of God, the creator of the universe. For the latter as such is grounded in God and is his total revelation. Thus as the individual in the whole is grounded in God, so God can be known only by the individual within the whole. As the totality of his revelations alone reveals him completely, so he can be known only in the totality, living in him, while he generously embraces it.[1]

Möhler's generally acknowledged truth was indeed general in intellectual circles touched by the romantic Weltanschauung. In it is rejected completely the individualism which lay behind the Aufklärung's anthropology. To seek one's meaning as an individual is to misunderstand that meaning altogether. The whole is not the aggregate of its parts, receiving its meaning from the parts. Rather, parts are bits and pieces which receive their meaning from the whole. For the individual man to comprehend himself as an individual apart from the whole, for him to operate as an individual apart from the whole, is to fall into egoism, which is the negation of the whole and so of all meaning and reality. Not only is the individual man a part of the whole of the race, mankind is a part of the universe. This is the common coin of the romantic thought-world. "We are not simply to be men, we are also to be more than men. Man is in fact equivalent to the universe," wrote Novalis.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

This "universally acknowledged truth" found thoughtful and thorough explication in Schleiermacher. He took this same intuition of reality as the fundamental human experience of givenness in the second Speech in the Reden über die Religion.

> Then say, weighing it quite generally and originally, what is every act of your life in itself and without distinction from other acts. What is it merely as act, as movement? Is it not the coming into being of something for itself, and at the same time in the Whole? It is an endeavor to return into the Whole, and to exist for oneself at the same time. These are the links from which the whole chain is made. Your whole life is such an existence for self in the whole.[2]

The participation of the subject in the universe is revealed by the senses. Self-consciousness, which Schleiermacher describes as arising through the comparison of sensations, reveals the subject to itself. But the two are experienced together, subject and object, and so are experienced as given. It is this pre-reflective unity in givenness which is the root of subject and object when the feeling is thematized.

> It is this earlier moment I mean which you always experience yet never experience. The phenomenon of your life is just the result of its constant departure and return. It is scarcely in time at all so swiftly it

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[1] Friedrich Philipp von Hardenberg (Novalis), Schriften, ed. P. Kluckholn, 4 vols. (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1929), 4:267.

[2] Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers, 3rd. ed., trans. John Oman (New York: Harper and Row, Torchbook edition, 1958), pp. 42f.

> passes; it can scarcely be described, so little does it properly exist.[1]

This experience of pure givenness which is the union of subject and object is the harmony of the individual and the universe.

> It is the first contact of the universal life with an individual. It fills no time and fashions nothing palpable. It is the holy wedlock of the Universe with the incarnated Reason for a creative, productive embrace. It is immediate, raised above all error and misunderstanding. You lie directly on the bosom of the infinite world. In that moment, you are its soul. Through one part of your nature you feel, as your own, all its powers and its endless life. In that moment it is your body, you pervade, as your own, its muscles and members and your thinking and forecasting set its inmost nerves in motion. In this way every living, original movement in your life is first received. Among the rest it is the source of every religious emotion.[2]

Later the author of the Glaubenslehre reformulated the ardent rhetoric of the Reden. But the experience of givenness embracing what can subsequently be differentiated as subject and object is the result of the discovery "in immediate self-consciousness" that we are "absolutely dependent." Through this we uncover the fact that "the infinite Being of God is found together with our own being and that, in general, dependence is the only way by which both can be one in us as self-consciousness or feeling."[3]

The second Speech of the Reden refers to the "universe," the Glaubenslehre to "the infinite Being of God," as the referent of the experience of givenness or absolute dependence. Schleiermacher does not intend simply to equate the two in a naively pantheistic manner. He distinguishes between the totality of finite causes and God as elements of self-consciousness.

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[1] Ibid., p. 43.

[2] Ibid., pp. 43f.

[3] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:173.

> The irreligious explanation of this feeling, that it is merely the expression of the dependence of an individual finite creature on the whole and the totality of all finite creatures, and that in fact it is not ordained to the idea of God but to the idea of the world, cannot be sufficient for those who experience within themselves this religious feeling. For they too know this being-one-with-the-world in their self-consciousness, but they know it as something else. More precisely, if one wishes to distinguish the two ideas from one another in some way, then most simply God is undivided absolute unity, while the world is divided unity which is at once the totality of all contrasts and differences. This being-one-with-the-world in self-consciousness is the consciousness of oneself as a part coexisting in the whole. Now since all the coexisting parts exist in interaction with one another, in each part accordingly this feeling is at base divided into the feeling of freedom in so far as it acts spontaneously on other parts, and the feeling of necessity in so far as other parts act spontaneously on it. The religious self-consciousness, however, knows nothing of such a division. For there is no feeling of freedom in relation to God nor is the feeling of dependence a necessity such that a feeling of freedom can appear as its counterpart.[1]

There is then a feeling of reciprocal interaction between the individuals and the world even when the world is viewed as a whole. But it is precisely mutuality which the feeling of absolute dependence, or of total givenness, rules out. Nevertheless Schleiermacher had written two consecutive propositions in the Glaubenslehre: "Everything which stimulates and determines our self-consciousness arises as such through God,"[1] yet "The consciousness just described and the recognition of determination of that which stimulates us by the system of nature are at their maximum refinement perfectly at one."[2] These propositions seem to identify the referent of the feeling of absolute dependence as alternatively God or "the system of nature." That such a reading was possible, leading to the charge of pantheism, Schleiermacher was aware. Interleaved in a copy of the first volume of the _Glaubenslehre_ are hand-written notes apparently composed in preparation for the second edition.[3] The note appended to the second of these propositions is, "The pantheist illusion: if the activity of things and the action of God are the same, then the world and God are also the same, which is obviously false. Rather the action is the same because the being of things as the source of their activity exists through the creative action of God."[4] The existence of the total system of the universe is dependent absolutely on God. What then does it mean to speak of the action of God and the activity of the world as the same? The question is answered in part by the explanation of divine omnipotence:

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[1] Ibid., 1:174f.

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[1] Ibid., 1:234f.

[2] Ibid., 1:241f.

[3] This volume is in the Schleiermacher-Archiv in Berlin. Extracts from these notes have been published as part of a synopsis of the propositions of the 1821-1822 and 1830-1831 editions in the seventh edition by Martin Redeker (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1960), 2:497f. (hereafter cited as _Glaubenslehre_, 7th ed.).

[4] Ibid., 2:518.

> Within the concept of divine omnipotence is contained first, that the total system of nature in all spaces and times is grounded on the divine causality which as eternal and omnipresent is contrasted to all natural causality, and second, that the divine causality, as it is expressed in our feeling of dependence, is perfectly set forth in the totality of finite being and thus that everything for which there is a productivity in God is realized and happens."[1]

The complete natural causal nexus is grounded in God's creative action but the latter finds full expression in the former. Clearly Schleiermacher is struggling to express an idea which can easily be misunderstood as pantheism. Some, e.g., Johann Friedrich Röhr,[2] did so misunderstand him and Schleiermacher in his manuscript notes for the revised edition responds,

> Röhr wants to make it known that I identify omnipotence and the natural system. But how then could I say that omnipotence constitutes the system? Everything exists entirely through the natural system so that each thing subsists because of all things. Everything exists entirely through omnipotence so that all things exist because of the One.[3]

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:287.

[2] Lutheran pastor at Weimar from 1820 until his death in 1848; he represented the rationalist theology of the previous century in that religion was reduced to pure morality.

[3] Glaubenslehre, 7th ed., 2:522.

Schleiermacher attempts to hold two convictions together. The first is that, in accord with the feeling of absolute dependence, everything without exception, i.e., all things together and each thing in particular, exists because of the omnipotent creative and sustaining power of God. At the same time he insists on the fact that each thing in particular is determined by its place within the totality of all things together. The attempt to hold these positions together is precisely what he described in 1829 as an "eternal convenant between the living Christian faith and an independent and freely working science," the terms of which would neither impede science by attacking its methodological principles on religious grounds nor render religious faith untenable by pitting it against the progress of the knowledge of nature.[1] In the revised edition of the Glaubenslehre he re-emphasized this concern. "It can never be necessary in the interest of religion so to interpret a fact that its dependence on God absolutely excludes its being conditioned by the system of Nature."[2] If scientific knowledge is possible it demands a coherent and uniform causal system. Thus religion can never be formulated in a way which undermines the possibility of science.

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[1] Schleiermachers Sendschreiben über seine Glaubenslehre an Lücke, ed. Hermann Mulert (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1908), p. 40.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 2nd ed., trans., p. 178.

On the other hand the violation of this "eternal covenant" proves destructive to religion as well.

> The higher life is an uninterrupted continuing reference of the finite to the infinite. This, together with the reference of the finite to each other, is true philosophizing. To annul finite relations for the sake of the relation between the infinite and the finite, that is what we can call mysticism in the bad sense of the word.[1]

Presumably it is mysticism in the bad sense because it cuts religion's ties to the rest of human experience. If one can maintain the reference of finite reality to the infinite while remaining respectful of the concrete relationships between one finite reality and another or between one finite reality and all others, then religion is healthy. It does not remove one from the world or isolate one in some peculiar intellectual backwater apart from any interaction with one's culture. But to sacrifice one element of the covenant to the other not only assaults scientific knowledge but places religion in the untenable position of an adversary against modern culture.

Thus Schleiermacher can indeed exclaim that Röhr and his other critics have misinterpreted him entirely, missing "my whole tendency."[2] He is always careful to distinguish divine causality, i.e., omnipotence, and the total causal system of nature, but he does maintain that they are co-extensive.

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[1] A statement of Schleiermacher's published in "Denkmale der inneren Entwicklung Schleiermachers," in Wilhelm Dilthey, ed., Leben Schleiermachers (Berlin, 1870), p. 130, quoted in Gerhard Spiegler, The Eternal Covenant: Schleiermacher's Experiment in Cultural Theology (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. VII.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 7th ed., 2:522.

> As referred to in the feeling of absolute dependence, God can only be described in such a way that on the one hand his causality is distinguished from that contained within the system of nature and is thus contrasted to it, and on the other hand, however, is equated with the latter in regard to its extent.[1]

Any particular within the totality is determined by the reciprocity of the particular causalities within the total framework, thus allowing for the experiences of dependence and freedom. Thus everything does exist "through the natural system so that each thing subsists because of all things." But the total framework itself exists through and is determined by divine causality, so that for the individual to experience himself as a part of the totality is to experience absolute dependence. Thus everything exists "through omnipotence so that all things exist because of the One."[2]

But if divine causality can be equated with the finite causal nexus in extent at the same time as it is to be distinguished from it, the question must be asked, "How?" Extension is the point of equation; what is the point of distinction? And, simply enough, the answer is that if they are alike in quantity, they are different in quality. This qualitative difference is expressed in another divine attribute correlative to omnipotence, viz., omniscience. This is the qualification of divine causality as free, i.e., the externalization of interiority. "Divine omniscience is related to divine omnipotence not as, in a human fashion, understanding and will are related; rather it is simply the spiritual quality of divine omnipotence itself."[1] Schleiermacher has no intention of employing the notion of "spirit" univocally for God and the human person. But at this point he is less concerned with its precise analogous use than with differentiating divine and finite causality.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:272.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 7th ed., 2:522.

> This spiritual quality indicates nothing more than what we earlier called inner vitality, and it is far more necessary to determine the distinction between the feeling of dependence on the supreme Being and that which might arise from a blind and lifeless necessity than to fix exactly what similarity exists between God and that which we refer to as spirit. We will speak further about this latter point below. But we can think of no better way to state the distinction than to oppose the lifeless and blind to the living and conscious because for us the supreme reality is conscious life.[2]

The relationship between the human being and the universe is a relationship of part to whole which must be uniform and deterministic. This does not mean that there is no freedom within the framework of finite causes. Such an idea is denounced.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:297.

[2] Ibid., 1:297f. See the excellent discussion of the relationship between omnipotence and omniscience in the Glaubenslehre in Robert R. Williams, Schleiermacher the Theologian: The Construction of the Doctrine of God (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 90-98.

> If one wishes to deny this distinction and misunderstand the ordination of self-consciousness to God as being nothing other than its direction toward the world, one can do so with some semblance of coherence only if at the same time one also eliminates in this latter direction any hint of the feeling of freedom. Hence, that irreligious view which explains as a deception the quality of religious self-consciousness we have described has in large part been the product of those who explain away the feeling of freedom as a delusion and who, since for similar reasons and with similar justification this must be present in even finite reality, smother everything in a feeling of universal necessity and leave no room for life's originality.[1]

But the feeling of freedom which must characterize the relationship between each finite part of the whole and every other part does not characterize the relationship between any finite part and the whole once the part is identified precisely as a part. In other words, the individual is free with regard to nature in so far as he regards himself as an individual over against nature. When he regards himself as part of the whole system of nature he ceases to experience himself as a center of spontaneity and discovers himself to be dependent. Every part of the whole is more or less free with regard to every other part and even with regard to the whole. But the whole as a whole is not free. And so to identify oneself with the whole, the universe, the system of nature, is to experience absolute dependence. The universe is the causal system which as a system is not free. God is the entirety of causality which as co-extensive with the universe as a system is free, i.e., is characterized by the "spiritual quality" of interiority.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:175.

The experience of absolute dependence, the experience which is the foundation of religion, i.e., of God-consciousness, arises in identification with the universe. But this is no simple equation of God and the universe, for the latter is experienced as dependent while the former is discovered as free. Rather than pantheism then, Schleiermacher describes a sophisticated and highly nuanced panentheism.

The Underpinning of the Ecclesiology of Einheit

It is here that Möhler was most at one with his great Reformed contemporary in 1825. The universe is not God but is rooted in God. Therefore to discover one's own rootedness in God, one must experience the universe as universe. What Möhler tried to express as the "expansion" of the individual to the whole[1] is what the young Schleiermacher described as "lying on the bosom of the infinite world," "becoming its soul," "feeling as one's own its powers and its endless life." For Möhler this is love, Gemüt; for Schleiermacher it is "the holy wedlock of the Universe with the incarnated Reason for a creative, productive embrace." This panentheism is certainly not unique to Schleiermacher and Möhler. But the latter's awareness of and esteem for the former is evident elsewhere in the various drafts of Einheit in der Kirche. It is clear that Schleiermacher's influence is present in the section added at the last moment before sending the text to the printer in which Möhler sought to give "an even deeper foundation" to his ecclesiology, not only in that the underpinning of the book, when revealed, parallels the Bewusstseinstheologie, but also in the terminology which Möhler employed. Thus, when he describes the devaluation of the whole as entailing a removal from God, he equates this with a darkening of our God-consciousness (Gottesbewusstsein).[1] The use of the term so characteristic of Schleiermacher further indicates Möhler's use of the Reformed theologian to give shape to the panentheist vision which is the "deeper foundation" of Einheit in der Kirche.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

Möhler began section 31 with an appeal to a universally acknowledged fact, that man is a part of the whole. The individual's identification with the whole leads to the discovery of his relationship with God, for the universe is the "total revelation" of God. But then the crucial question must be answered: how is the individual to come to this identification with the universe?

> This is the secret of our knowledge of God: he who created the whole can only be known from the whole, for he has wholly revealed himself only in the whole. How may the individual know him? Through the fact that, although he is not the whole, he is able to embrace it with great feeling, with love. So, although he is not the whole, the whole is nevertheless within him, and he

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[1] Ibid., pp. 98f.

> knows what the whole is. In love we individual beings expand ourselves to the whole. Love comprehends God.[1]

But to what is love directed? Some object more concrete than "the whole" must be given if this "great feeling" is truly to bring the individual to transcend himself. Is there any embodiment of the whole toward which the individual can direct himself, to which he can give himself in self-transcending love?

"Man is equivalent to the universe," Novalis had written.[2] The totality of the human community is the universe which the individual inhabits. The discovery of and interaction with others is the experience of the whole. Humanity is the individual man's entry into the whole. The young Schleiermacher had written of the first man that, while alone, he understood nothing and was unable to comprehend the universe which surrounded him; he was a spectator, not a participant.

> Then the Deity recognized that the world would be nothing as long as man was alone. He created a helpmate for him. At length the deep-toned harmonies awoke in him, and the world fashioned itself before his eyes. In flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, he discovered humanity. In this first love he had a foretaste of all love's forms and tendencies--in humanity he found the world.[3]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Von Hardenberg (Novalis), 4:267: "Mensch ist überhaupt soviel als Universum."

[3] Schleiermacher, On Religion, pp. 71f.

This provides the concretization of the universe toward which the individual can transcend himself in love. "The universe is represented for us in mankind."[1] It is by extending himself in love to mankind that the individual is able to expand himself to the level of the universe, embrace it, and so "comprehend God." By fixing his gaze on himself rather than on the whole as that is represented to us by the human community, by affirming his independence and stressing individuality at the expense of wholeness, man rejects love, narrows his heart and shrinks his perspective on God. The God-consciousness is darkened. This egoism is the essence of sin. Since the whole is the only full revelation of the divine, and it is that totality which the individual's narrow-heartedness destroys, God can no longer be fully revealed to him. Each man fashions his "God" for himself from his shrunken perspective. "The necessary consequence of this standpoint" is that there would be as man "gods" as there are human beings. Try as he may, however, man cannot totally sever his communal ties. On every level of his existence he finds himself forming societies, however limited in scope. These societies will each have their own "God." "There has been a multiplicity of gods in the multiplicity of nations."[2] The egoistic refusal to reach out in love to universal mankind is the origin of polytheism. This is, at least, preferable to the extreme, which is, happily, unattainable. Because of their check on egoism, nations, as limited societies, have given rise to some notion of God, however inadequate. Thorough egoism, rigorously maintained, would isolate the individual completely, making him no longer a human being. The thoroughly isolated man would no longer exist as a man, and his "God" would reflect him, i.e., he would not exist. The limit case of egoism is atheism.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

[2] Ibid., p. 99.

Möhler moves from the situation of man as man to his situation as a Christian. The Christian revelation perfects the first revelation which is creation itself. This is a theme which is, as has been noted, present in Drey who had defined revelation as God's self-expression outside himself, i.e., "in something other which is not God." Thus the universe itself is divine revelation "perfectly realized, entirely sufficient."[1] The achievement of self-consciousness and freedom means that God's revelation becomes man's work.

> He himself, originally God's work, posits himself as free and independent being. That inner movement and attraction, originally God's power and Spirit, is now his own will which determines itself for this or against that as it pleases him. All ideas are now become his thoughts which he has produced for himself. Even the clearest voice of revelation, the conscience within man's

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[1] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. 10. See also Vermeil, pp. 39-49.

> breast, is the law which he gives himself. The originally divine activity becomes man's work which he governs as its proper lord.[1]

This process of secularization which accompanies man's attainment of self-consciousness and self-determination places the newly awakened ego over against the non-ego. The latter then becomes the opponent which the former seeks wholly or partially to control. Creation as revelation is no longer the appearance worn by the universe. "Faith in this revelation is now no longer given through immediate feeling or immediate insight, but only mediated by reflection, and is consequently not vital, not actual. The profane view of the universe rules and undermines the religious."[2] A new or second revelation is need but of such a sort that it cannot be twisted by human egoism into man's self-expression. The fact of this second revelation may be denied, but not its character. It reveals God as superior to human thought and consciousness and to creaturely will and moral strength. This second or special revelation is found in the religious traditions of all the races of man, is uniquely concentrated in the history of Israel and culminates in Christianity. In light of the Christian revelation the first revelation, creation, is once again able to be understood.

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[1] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. 11.

[2] Ibid., p. 12.

> Christianity therefore appears in agreement with the earlier revelations and in accord with God's action toward us men as in that period in our history when in a multitude of ways man was instructed by God, taught his true relationship within the universe to God, the complete lordship of God over him, and recognized the nothingness of all his selfish, self-willed attempts by which he chose in his state of estrangement to fashion for himself his own world independent of the divine and over against it--the period when man freely submitted to the divine ordinance. Through this he is freed from the endless battle with himself and with the world as well as from its consequences, is received with fatherly love by God to whom as a child he again draws near, and so a universal redemption is celebrated.[1]

The second revelation is the restoration of the first revelation. This is not the "beautiful thought" which Möhler noted in Schleiermacher.[2] That had implied, as he understood it, the movement of creation to a new level, making redemption not salvation from sin but elevation from the primitive darkness of undeveloped God-consciousness. Drey, on the other hand, very clearly maintains the idea of a fall, an obscuring of the revelation which is the universe and man's participation in it. Möhler too maintains that the fall is not simply to be equated with creation. They may in fact have coincided in time, but the one is not the other. For creation is absolutely dependent upon the will of God, but the fall is the result of human free choice.

So Möhler notes that the universe which is God's revelation is truly revelation, i.e., is truly self-communication. God's self-disclosure can be received by the human pole of the divine-human relationship. The misreading of the universe is the result not of an incomplete creation incapable of God-consciousness, but of a free decision not to accept the universe of which man finds himself a member. "To exalt oneself in pride above one's station is to fall below the whole of which we are formed to be a part. We do not raise ourselves to the All, but instead mean-spiritedly drag it down to us and glimpse God only in proportion to how large a part of the whole we are."[1] This darkening of our God-consciousness is the result of sin, not of an as yet inadequate stage of creation.

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[1] Ibid., p. 17. [2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 27.

The language used of Christ and of the second revelation is, however, that of a "new creator" and a "new creation," which may give rise to the "beautiful thought" that the "old" or "first" creation is not perfected until the impartation of the Spirit in Christ. In fact, in 1825, Möhler was not very concerned to avoid that interpretation. As we have seen, when he makes explicit reference to this idea of "a great theologian of our time," he does not reject it out of hand but contents himself with describing the "doctrine of the Fathers" as "more correct."[2] But if this section of Einheit in der Kirche is read against the background of Drey's teaching at Tübingen, a more accurate understanding of Möhler's intent is possible.

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[1] Ibid., p. 98.

[2] Ibid., p. 27.

Christianity, Drey had written in 1819, is the "final revelation of God."

> Viewed as revelation generally, Christianity is the culmination of all previous revelation and is superior because here, in Christ, God has revealed himself to men in the fullest way. The idea of God's incarnation and the idea of the God-man are inseparable from the final revelation.--Considered at its culmination and so in relation to its goal, Christianity could have effected nothing other than the restoration of the original relation of unity in the form of a freely willed and conscious oneness. To this end it must be understood that the idea of a universal redemption, like the idea of a universal mediator and redeemer, is both necessary and essential to Christianity. --In and through that unity, the idea of a Kingdom of God, originally expressed in the universe, lying at the root of the first religious feeling but misunderstood under the dominion of egoism, is once again recognized both theoretically and practically. This idea accordingly seems the loftiest idea as well, the idea in Christianity to which all others lead and from which they proceed. And Christ, who accomplishes its universal acknowledgement, is therefore likewise the visible head of the Kingdom just as the Church is its visible expression and sensible appearance.[1]

When Drey wrote that "Christianity is the culmination of all previous revelations," he meant not only earlier "special" revelations, e.g., the Mosaic law, but also "general" revelation, the universe itself with its two divisions, humanity and nature. That this was his intention is clear from his contention that the Kingdom of God which is the central message of Christianity had been "originally expressed in the universe" and was "at the root of the first religious feeling." The completion of creation is not then the advancement of humanity to a new, previously unattainable level of God-consciousness. Rather the new creation worked in Christ is, to use Drey's own phrase, "the restoration of the original relation of unity," a relation shattered by a freely chosen distortion of the meaning of the universe. Thus, unlike Möhler's understanding of the "very beautiful thought of a great theologian of our time," there very definitely is "actual talk of a fall and redemption from the fall."

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[1] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. 19.

This is not by any means to imply that nothing decisively _new_ was introduced into the universe with Christianity. Drey mentioned "the idea of God's incarnation and the idea of the God-man" as being intrinsic to Christianity. The necessary corollary of the "idea" of the incarnation is "the idea of a universal redemption" which is nothing other than that "loftiest idea," the Kingdom of God. Thus what is new is in fact a new way of coming at what is as old as creation. Christianity introduced "a mass of religious experiences and ideas among men which were not there previously" and by doing so brought many others to "clarity and vitality" which had "slumbered" before, and corrected still others.[1] Creation is indeed re-created in Christ, but that re-creation is also restoration. What is new is parallel to what is old.

This parallel is the organizing principle of section

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[1] Ibid., p. 18.

31 of Einheit in der Kirche. Möhler has maintained that "being one with the universe" is "the condition for true knowledge of God, the creator of the universe." "God can be known only by the individual within the whole."[1] If the creator is known only by one who is united with the whole of the creation, then the new creator is known only by one who is united with the whole of the new creation. "Christ, the Son of God, the new creator, can only be understood within the totality of his faithful, only when the individual affirms himself as a member of the whole, the new creation, as God the Father, the creator of all, is understood only in the individual's being one with the All."[2] The unity of creation is the revelation of the Father, the unity of the Church is the Son's "great work, his revelation." The Church is to be the universe freely willing itself, i.e., the Church is the society of those who freely and self-consciously choose to be what they have been created to be simply by virtue of finite existence but which they could not have perceived themselves to be because finite existence has been sinfully distorted.

The refusal to accept one's position in relation to the universe leads to a misunderstanding of who God is. The impoverishment of the universe entails an impoverishment of the image of its creator who is revealed in it. Man reduces "God" to his own dimensions, a movement which results in polytheism. Similarly, separation from the unity of all believers which is Christ's great work and proper revelation leads to a narrowness of perspective which distorts this second revelation. As complete and thorough separation from the universe, were such possible, would make the existence of God incredible and so end in atheism, complete and thorough separation from the community of believers makes the uniqueness of the existence of Christ incredible and so proves to be the reduction of Christ to the purely and simply human.[1] This is the meaning of the statement which ended the previous section:

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

[2] Ibid., p. 99.

> As the fact becomes more obscure within the Catholic system or, to speak properly, within Christianity that a community of all believers was founded by redemption in Christ and one comes to the consciousness of Christ and his divinity only within his community, so in consistent ecclesiastical egoism, or perfect heresy, where each one expects to discover Christ for himself, necessarily the actuality of redemption is denied and, in regard to his unique dignity, Christ together with Christianity is dismissed from our mind. We see this among the Gnostics and their dogmas, and we have seen it in modern times in Protestantism where, after the egoistic principle was followed out to its consequences, the ecclesial unity opposed to the confused Reformers was attacked as foolishness, Christ degenerated into a human being, redemption was eliminated, and Christianity soon went to pieces--among so-called thinking people. But, since Christianity has been once more elevated to an honorable estate and Christ has again been acknowledged in his unique dignity, there once more reigns over all a

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[1] Ibid., pp. 99f.

> longing for reunion, and this most especially among the most profound Protestant theologians.[1]

This is an appeal to historical examples, the Gnostics and the course of Protestantism from the Reformers to the rationalists of the previous century--"the so-called thinking people"--and its change of direction among Möhler's contemporaries. In section 31 he gives his claim "an even deeper foundation."

> It cannot surprise us, although, if the matter is viewed superficially, it may sound odd, that one who knows only himself as redeemed should fail to perceive in this new creation within himself the creative power of Christ, his mediatorial role between God and man, and thus the unification of divinity and humanity in him. For together with the reconciliation and reunion with God effected through Christ, there has likewise been reconciliation and union with all the redeemed, and so the community of all. In this unity of our life with that of all the redeemed we first become conscious of true union with Christ as we do of unity with God in that harmony of individual life with the life of the universe. So in fact our own true redemption through Christ and our communion with him is essentially linked to communion with the totality of the redeemed; it is identical with the latter; they must not be divorced for, in the divorce, faith in the divinity of Christ cannot perdure. In other words, self-seeking, be it ever so refined, is not the standard by which we measure Christ: in such a case we find merely a Christ like us, because we find nothing accomplished in us really and truly great, truly divine. This latter is the consciousness of being subsumed, of living, of being able to live and of needing to live in and with his precious community purchased by his blood. Without this necessary constituent, he is like us because we are with him what we are without him.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 97. The final phrase mentioning the "most profound Protestant theologians" was a late addition to the text prepared for the printer. Given the earlier reference to Schleiermacher as "a great contemporary theologian," Möhler surely intends him to be included here.

[2] Ibid., p. 100.

The parallel between the individual's free acceptance of his participation in the universe as the key which allows the universe to be seen as God's self-revelation and the believer's loving union with the community of faith as the prerequisite for recognizing the community as Christ's self-expression allows Möhler to draw several postulates. First, the objection may be raised that Möhler has too closely linked the reality of salvation to conscious union with the community of believers. It might appear that only those are truly participants in redemption who can freely _and therefore consciously_ embrace the Church, i.e., only those who are aware of the very views for which Möhler argues in _Einheit in der Kirche_ can be said to enjoy fully the fruits of salvation. But "we very often _live_ the truth without being conscious of it and are as often better than our conceptions as otherwise."[1] Not everyone comes to a philosophically conscious awareness of his "oneness with the All" before living that oneness. Möhler knows that not every human being need be a philosopher to be human and does not suggest that every Christian need be a thologian to be a believer. "I merely state the bond between the two [i.e., the truth and our conceptions of it] which Saint Paul and the ancient Church with him proclaimed in the most definite terms."

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[1] Ibid., pp. 100f.

Second, the desired relationship between our living out of the truth and our conception of it is that the two coincide. Möhler adds this because he wishes to preclude anyone saying that "it is perfectly sufficient for someone simply to acknowledge that many are redeemed by Christ and that one stands in a spiritual, ideal communion with them."[1] Thus he insists, in full accord with the wissenschaftlich method which he employs throughout Einheit in der Kirche and which he had been taught by Drey and ultimately derived from Schelling, that "everything which is truly ideal is likewise real." The ideal faith-community so glowingly described by the New Testament authors is also resolutely pursued by them in the formation of the concrete local churches. "Consequently the community of believers is in the proper sense ideal only to the extent that it is real, just as it could only become real because it is ideal." The community of faith which Möhler has described, membership in which is absolutely necessary if one is truly to know Christ, the community which is his self-revelation, is also the concrete, existing Church. This is the principle around which the second half of Möhler's work is organized. Having moved the locus of the Spirit from the solitary believer to the community of the faithful, he must show how that community is in fact the historical, visible, hierarchically organized

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[1] Ibid., p. 101.

Church with all its official functions and its sacramental worship.

Third, heresy within the Christian community can be understood as a parallel to heathenism without. The distortion of man's relationship to the universe leads to narrow, limited visions of "God." Under the pressure of the individual's self-exaltation at the expense of his perception of participation in the All, "God" breaks up into "gods." Similarly, the individual believer's self-imposed isolation from the believing community leads to a distorted and onesided understanding of Christ whose self-revelation is the community. In the first instance the result is polytheism, in the second "a certain polychristism."[1] Heresy corresponds to "national religion," the latter an unforunate mutation of the first revelation, the former an equally unhappy aberration with regard to the second revelation.

Fourth, the "national religions" were not of equal remove from the truth. The more embracing the community which held a particular religious view, the nearer the community came to the willing acceptance of the universe whose image is the whole of humanity, and, accordingly, the more adequate was this community's "God." In a parallel fashion, the greater the community of believers, even though heretical, the more closely will its "Christ" approximate the true Christ known only to the full community of believers. The full community is, of course, by its very definition, not heretical, for heresy is separatism. Thus the Christian is better advised to belong to an heretical sect than to seek to stand in total isolation from all other Christians. Not every sect is equally heretical. Thus there are those who maintain that humanity is only "declared" justified, that in Christ God "views" us as justified. Such groups of believers, however, preserve the proper conception of the relationship of the divine and human natures in Christ, which is no small point in their favor when viewed against the Christological heresies of the first centuries. Such communities of believers preserve the basic tenets of faith presumably precisely because they are communities. They may not recognize the importance of that fact with the full living force of Catholicism, and hence their difficulties, but neither are their members moved by unrestrained egoism, hence their comparative orthodoxy. What they fail to realize is that holiness is one with love. Thus one who has been made holy is also necessarily one who is moved by love, i.e., one who is moved to community with others. A "merely imputed justification" is, however, entirely compatible with a believer who is not moved by love and is therefore not fully participant in community. That Protestant ecclesiology will always be inadequate while Protestant notions of justification remain unchanged is a principle typical of Möhler's thought in Symbolik. In Einheit in der Kirche, however, he raises the idea that if Protestant ecclesiology were different, if the community established were both deep and broad enough, then the Protestant understanding of justification simply could not stand.[1]

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[1] Ibid.

> From all this one can see both how it is that I believe and with how much justice that the return to the Church can be called the return to union with Christ, indeed, to union with God. For "whoever sees the Son sees the Father" (John 14, 9), and as the recognition of the Son, so is that of the Father. As was charged against Christianity by paganism from Celsus to Julian, "To want one God for all men is nonsense. It would mean forcibly extracting mankind from its natural state. Accordingly Christianity must come to grief as unnatural." So it has been charged against the Church by heresy from the very beginning, "To want one Christ is unworkable. Each one must be able to have his own Christ."[2]

The first chapter of Einheit in der Kirche had been entitled "Mystical Unity." It is this "mystical" union with which Möhler ends section 31, the section added to provide the underpinning for his argument. Union with the Church is union with Christ which is, in fact, union with God. When Möhler refers to this as a "mystical" union, he employs a term for which he has a very specific meaning. It is an unusual term for him to use because it has an almost always pejorative connotation in the writing of his teacher, Drey. The latter had described theology as the "construction of religious faith through knowledge"[3] and sketched two possible methods for such a construction, that of history and that of philosophy. The only other possibilities, he wrote, were "naturalism," which made religious truth completely the product of human reason, and "mysticism." This is described as regarding all historically grounded belief as "dead and useless for in any fashion stimulating religious life." Rather, it "seeks knowledge in an immediate vision, certainty in immediate internal experience of that which externally proceeds from mouth to mouth as a dead word--even if God's."[1] Seen purely from the perspective of religious practice, this may well be the "flowering of religious life," but, viewed from the theoretical perspective, it is "a source of countless delusions and errors." Its totally subjective nature renders it "incapable of either communication or positive evidence." Mysticism "disdains all science and intellectual training and anticipates reaching religion's goal without them."[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 102.

[2] Ibid., pp. 102f.

[3] Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, p. 27.

Möhler's very positive use of the term to describe the kind of unity which exists between the individual Christian and the Church, and, through this, his union with Christ and so with God, is striking. Far from being the "source of countless delusions and errors," it provides within Christian self-understanding a perspective which is complementary to and even fundamental for speculative theology. The ancient

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[1] Ibid., p. 28.

[2] Ibid., p. 35.

Church had not begun with an elaborate speculative system, but was fully free to develop one if it proved necessary. This ability to develop into a speculative system is no betrayal of the essence of Christianity but is rather in full accord with it. If faith grasps the whole person, if it "permeates the whole being and nature of man," then philosophy, in the broad sense of systematic reflection, can not be unaffected by it. "The ideas of reason had to be wedded to faith and their mutual permeation, in which, as is understandable, faith appeared as the norm, was then in this situation gnosis," which is "the reflection of the whole disposition of faith."[1] Not surprisingly, the first attempts to express this disposition of faith in speculative terms led to some unfortunate overstatements and understatements. An opposition to this speculative or gnosticizing tendency appeared within the Church centered around the "more mystical theologians" described as those who took issue with the expression of faith in a system of philosophical concepts as "friviolous and rash." Möhler uses Clement of Alexandria as an example of the first tendency and Irenaeus as an example of the second. The fact that both are regarded as Fathers of the Church is an indication that both styles of theology are in principle acceptable and useful to the community.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 130.

> The Church itself, however, stood with noble restraint in the middle. The Spirit, who enlivened it, nourished, penetrated and united all and resolved within it the oppositions of individual personalities. In the consciousness of its strength, therefore, it left all its children free to follow their own promptings so long as they took no deliberate direction contrary to that which was acknowledged as common and which had always been so.[1]

With the provision that the pursuit of one's own genius never become egoism, which would lead to separatism, the two tendencies--the speculative or gnostic and the experiential or mystical--are both "grounded in the Church." The two styles of thought are different reactions to different situations. The Church viewed itself, as Möhler has been at pains to emphasize from the first page of Einheit in der Kirche, "as an immediate divine strength, as a life in and through the Holy Spirit." It did not seek, nor initially did it have any reason to seek, any conceptual expression, any "more precise external expression of its inner life." Such refusal to launch out into speculative realms equipped with philosophical tools was wise at least for a time, for the attempt to express the Christian life-force in philosophical language can easily end by producing a hollow, artificial, time-bound religion. But when it became obvious that some sort of doctrinal precision was needed to counterbalance false understandings of that life-force, the Church proved perfectly capable of producing such precision. This need, which first became pressing in the Christological controversies of the second through the sixth centuries, is the justification for those believers endowed with philosophical abilities to exercise them on their experience of Christian life.

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[1] Ibid., p. 131.

> Speculation by individual believers is merely the imitation of the Church when it saw itself forced to present its symbols ever more clearly. These symbols of the Church can be viewed as the common and primitive speculation of the faithful, as the immediate expression of their united faith. The individual believer must discover within himself this primitive speculation of the Church. Since, however, the Church only expresses its immediate consciousness in unique instances and expresses it only as consciousness, the believer seeks besides this to trace out its construction, to make the general consciousness into a fully individualized one in the way previously described. The mystical and the speculative theologians then act in this way: If a piece of music is heard, some one may listen to it for its total impression, for the blending of its various instruments or voices. Or others after they have listened to it, may resolve it into its particular components and distinguish precisely what arrangement of these individual parts produces this harmony, by what principles this is so, and whatever else may apply along these lines. Now the mystic is delighted by the magnificent harmonious sound which Christianity in its totality produces in its innermost life. He lives in vision, in immediate spiritual enjoyment, and would regard it as the destruction of this, as its weakening and desecration, if he should put it to analysis. The speculative theologian sees analysis in an entirely different way. But he too must have heard the harmony and have listened to it or else he speaks of things foreign to him and does not know what he says. And so in this is their unity, and together they both illustrate varying aspects of the Church and find its life to be both their justification and the necessity of their methods and styles.[1]

It is noteworthy that Möhler accords what he calls the mystical perspective not only historical but logical priority. The believer who "lives in immediate spiritual enjoyment" of the experience of Spirit-generated life need never move into the realm of speculation, just as the listener who is delighted by the piece of music need never study composition and harmonics. But the speculative theologian has no basis for reflection if he does not directly experience the Christian life within himself. He speaks then as one removed from his subject, as a clinical observer not a participant, and so "does not know what he says."

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[1] Ibid., pp. 132f.

Clearly Möhler is using the term "mystical" in a context different from that of Drey. In 1819 the latter had been describing a "scientific" method in the pursuit of theology. The attempt to reach religious knowledge in "immediate vision" or "immediate internal experience" obviously falls outside and runs counter to this endeavor. Thus Drey's strictures against "mysticism" are not surprising. Indeed, it is his willingness to concede that it may well be the "flowering of religious life" when viewed apart from the theological enterprise that is remarkable. For this mysticism is disdainful of science and seeks to attain religious perfection without careful and precise reflection. When such an attitude excludes theology or is mistaken for it, it becomes the source of fanaticism and error.

Drey's one-time student, on the other hand, is willing to speak of mystical theology alongside speculative theology. Certainly the classical example of this mysticism whom he selects, Irenaeus, is scarcely the sort of "mystic" whom Drey describes. The very fact that Möhler can use the term "theology" in reference to this element in Christianity indicates that he is not using "mysticism" in the same way as his teacher. For this mystical element is not opposed to speculative theology. It is itself "primitive speculation." It is the self-conscious reaction to the Christian experience which may, given certain circumstances and a particular kind of mind, grow into speculative or scientific theology. It is, however, prior to and richer than speculative theology and therefore may react against the latter if it is something "existing for its own sake, separated from life." Möhler's positive estimate of the mystical element in Christianity is not then a rejection of his older colleague at Tübingen. Rather, he gives a new and different meaning to the word "mystical" when he speaks of "mystical unity" between Christ and the Church, the believer and the Church, and so Christ and the believer.

This use of the word "mystical" in a very positive sense to describe the union between the Redeemer and the individual who is redeemed is similar to Schleiermacher's vocabulary in the Glaubenslehre. The great Berlin theologian was somewhat hesitant in his use of the term because it was so open to misconstruction.

> This description of the redemptive activity of Christ as the creation of a life held in common by him and by us, and consequently a new life within us, has always been called by many "mystical," an expression which is

> better avoided, as much in its good as in its bad sense, because of its lack of precision.[1]

But there is a good sense. The difficulty is that to understand that good sense one must share the experience which is termed "mystical."

> If, however, we now accept this mystical element to the extent that the union of believers with Christ through his person-forming activity may be termed a mystical union in the accepted sense, then just as the highest flowering of the civic communal spirit will appear to men who are not yet incorporated into it as something inconceivable and mysterious, so it should not lead to a misunderstanding detrimental to this element that, if redemption is based only on the action of Christ but seen apart from the foundation of a common life, such a view ends up in the realm of magic. And our mystical view lies, in fact, mid-way between this magical understanding and that impoverished perspective which grounds the redemption simply on our imperfect imitation.[2]

The key point in this good meaning of mysticism is for Schleiermacher "the union of believers with Christ" which is achieved "through his person-forming activity." The alternative ways of formulating the redemption worked in Christ are a mythic substitutionary atonement by vicarious sacrifice--the "magical understanding"--or an ethical inspiration encouraging humanity to self-sacrificing altruism--a position marred by the observable fact of Christians' lamentably "imperfect imitation" of their Lord. It is a union of life between the Redeemer and the redeemed which resolves this impasse. But their union is achieved only because there has been a "foundation of a common life" by Christ. Möhler's formula that "the return to the Church can be called the return to union with Christ, indeed, to union with God" is so close to Schleiermacher's union between Christ and the individual believer through a communal life founded by Christ, that, if one grants Möhler's claim that the position expounded in Einheit in der Kirche is the authentically Catholic tradition extending from the ante-Nicene community to the Church of his day, then one can readily understand his insistence that Schleiermacher is "catholicized." Or, if one begins with the assumption that this "mystical" understanding of the redemption which depends so strongly upon a "high" ecclesiology is distinctively Schleiermacher's achievement--and so surely it appeared to most Protestant theologians at the beginning of the nineteenth century--then one can sympathize with the charge that Möhler "Schleiermacherized."

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:257.

[2] Ibid., 2:258.

This use of the term "mysticism" by Schleiermacher likewise makes the reality so designated within Christianity a foundational but complementary element to what Möhler has termed "speculation." The Glaubenslehre is by definition a systematic reflection upon and ordering of the dogmatic statements of a particular Christian communion. Yet no one will be able to understand this reflective formulation who has not shared the communal life-experience, just as no one who dwells in semi-barbarous individualism can possibly appreciate the communal bond uniting those who make up the fully organized state. The experience of the mystical union grounds and guides the systematic reflection: this principle undergirds both Schleiermacher's analogy of the state and Möhler's example of listening to a piece of music.

> While, according to the idea of the Catholic Church, Christian living certainly precedes speculation, the latter creates out of the rich treasure of inner experience, out of the inexhaustible fullness of the Holy Life. And as unfathomable as this life is, so deep and so rich will be his contemplation whose spiritual make-up especially renders him sensitive to and capable of it. While he who begins with an insubstantial concept wanders off into a harsh, arid wasteland, because he desires fruit before he has planted seeds and tended a shoot from which they might spring, while the character and soul of such a one loses all constancy and strength through his pointless speculation and is shown to be incapable of strenuous exertions, the Catholic gnostic grows in all these respects toward ever more elevated virtuousness. For his contemplation proceeded only from his heart and so was again a stimulus to and therefore a new strengthening of it. As the Church required a pure and holy life as the condition for the knowledge of God and true faith, this was especially so of gnosis. This in turn exerted an effect on the purification of life. Greater purity of life furthered and strengthened the depth of reflection. The more the latter flowed into the whole ecclesial life so much the more richly did this pour its blessing back upon it. Consequently this truly holy science was seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Church expressed itself so decisively on this score that it venerated the greatest defenders of its truth as saints.[1]

"Mysticism" and "speculation" may mutually foster one another, but only the former is described as a condition of the latter.

Section 31 of Einheit in der Kirche was added after the rest of the book had been completed in order to explain the underpinning of this "mystical union" between Christ and the individual through the Church. Möhler's explanation of the ground upon which he had built his Spirit-centered, organically modelled ecclesiology hinges on the parallel between the first and second revelations which, in turn, depends upon the acceptance of creation as revelation. That the universe _is_ revelation Möhler intends very seriously and literally. This is stated with the utmost clarity: "There is _no knowledge of God_ without special revelation.[1] Möhler supports this statement in this study "in the spirit of the Fathers of the first three centuries" by means of several citations from Clement of Alexandria to the effect that God can be known only through an act of grace, an activity of the divine Logos, through the impartation of the Holy Spirit.[2] Yet the universe is God's "total revelation."[3] It is from conscious oneness with the universe that man knows God. So the universe itself is the result of an "act of grace," the expression of the "activity of the divine Logos." The creation of the universe is an "impartation of the Holy Spirit."

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 140f.

The act of grace which is the creation at large corresponds to the act of grace which creates the human being. For the human being is created with a receptivity for the revelation which is the universe. There is within man "a capacity for faith, a longing for the divine, a presentiment, a need for it, a foundation and inner ability for receiving true knowledge of God."[1] In fact this receptivity for revelation by itself remains simply a "longing" which is undirected. A mere "presentiment" or "need" or "inner ability" can not by itself lead to more than a vague desire for something more. Left to itself, this capacity for belief "merely wanders in darkness, does not attain to clear consciousness and falls into everlasting misconceptions and contradictions." This, Möhler explains, is what Athenagoras meant by his claim that the poets and philosophers of Greece had in some sense served their nation in the role fulfilled by the prophets in Israel, although, because they had relied on their own abilities rather than on God, they had themselves only glimpsed the truth and had never been able to come to agreement among themselves.[2] It is the same point that Justin seeks to express in his notion of the *logoi spermatikoi*.[3] In fact, without specifically numbering them, Möhler mentions three explanations in the course of this discussion for the presence of religious truth among peoples outside the tradition of Israel and Christianity. One is that of the logoi spermatikoi, the "seeds" of truth planted by the Logos throughout humanity, a position he notes in Justin and other Fathers. A second is that the Greek philosophers derived their glimpses of God's revelation from the Mosaic law and the writings of the prophets, an idea found in Justin, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria and Origen. But in addition to these two explanations found in his ante-Nicene sources, there is a third which Möhler mentions without any patristic reference to support it: that there was a primitive revelation (Uroffenbarung) common to all men.

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[1] Ibid., p. 117. [2] Ibid., p. 119. [3] Ibid., p. 98.

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[1] Ibid., p. 120.

[2] Ibid.; the reference is to the *Legatio pro christianis* 7.

[3] Ibid.; Möhler refers to the *I Apologia* 5 and 44, as well as citations to Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria.

The first revelation is the fact of creation, the existence of the universe, which is the basis of all religion as Möhler and, before him, Drey had written. The greater the freely willed union with this All, the richer and fuller the religious vision of man and the truer his conception of God. And since humanity represents the universe for the individual,[1] the more embracing one's communal relationships, the greater his insight into revelation. Thus the parallel between creation and the incarnation is carefully constructed on the ground that the former is God's self-communication and the latter is the clarification of that communication. This clarification takes place because the isolated insights, the individual recognitions of the truth, which were all that humanity (outside of Israel) had once it had lost touch with the primitive revelation of the universe due to egoistic separatism, are shown to be not purely subjective by being given an objective basis. "Truth has become objective and has itself appeared in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the truth in itself."[1] Thus no "sure" knowledge of God exists outside of this second revelation. Glimmerings of that knowledge may appear because of various individuals' appropriation of the primitive revelation. But there is absolutely no such knowledge without some revelation. The "longing for the divine" within the human heart requires an external stimulus for its initiation. The "capacity for faith" is reason (Vernunft) which is passive. "If we could summarize everything so, reason-knowledge, rests finally on faith; reason-faith, however, demands revelation-faith."[2] This knowledge of God is not derived from the raw material of the universe. Such knowledge would be the result of the mind's operation on the datum. Thus it would be the product of understanding (Verstand) not reason. "Reason-knowledge," to use Möhler's term, is not derived from the universe, but given in the experience of the universe. For as Möhler writes in section 31, the universe "as such is grounded in God and is his total revelation."[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 98.

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[1] Ibid., p. 121.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 98.

The Pantheist possibility

The similarity between the underpinning which Möhler has given the Erlebnistheologie in order to allow the importance of the community to be seen within it, and the panentheism of Schleiermacher, has been noted. In section 31 this understructure has surfaced. The subtle panentheist position taken by Schleiermacher was, to his chagrin, often misinterpreted as pantheism. Möhler, too, raised this question regarding his Protestant contemporary but from a unique perspective, that of ecclesiology. He saw what he believed to be a major difficulty in Schleiermacher's ecclesiology, a difficulty which he himself struggled to avoid in Einheit in der Kirche. That this struggle was successful I believe Möhler himself came to doubt. And it was this doubt which moved him past the ecclesiology of his first work and toward the new ideas of his later writings.

In the first appendix to Einheit in der Kirche, entitled "The Holy Spirit within the Faithful according to the Doctrine of the Fathers," Möhler writes with regard to the indwelling of the Spirit in the community:

> It is rooted in the nature of the Catholic Church that the greatest circumspection and most exacting precision with regard to doctrine is conjoined with this mystical perspective, a fact which cannot be the case in any separatist-mystical sect, which generally abandons clarity of consciousness in favor of profundity and frequently degenerates into a hopeless pantheism. Furthermore, even in Origen's day and through his agency the Church battled against those who dissolved the Holy Spirit into the faithful and in no way distinguished him from his communication, not permitting him to be a true divine

> hypostasis but making him merely some sort of Christian communal spirit.[1]

In his notes it becomes clear that Möhler was much less concerned with third-century Alexandria than with his contemporaries.

> Nothing is so very contrary to the history of the Church as to declare with Schleiermacher that the Holy Spirit is merely the Christian communal spirit [_Gemeingeist_] or with de Wette that he is the communal feeling [_Gemeingefühl_] of Christians. If one agrees to a communal feeling then he is engaged in open conflict with himself. In nothing has the communal feeling of Christians been so resolutely proclaimed as that the Holy Spirit is not merely itself. Or what has remained more constant or more resolute than that Christians pray to the Holy Spirit? But who would want to pray to a communal feeling? The communal feeling thus certainly denies the statement that the Holy Spirit is only the communal feeling. This is the statement of a separatist feeling opposed to the communal feeling.[2]

Möhler understands Schleiermacher as identifying the Holy Spirit with the _Gemeingeist_ of the Christian community. Two questions must be raised: is this understanding just to Schleiermacher, and does Möhler himself remain blameless in this respect, given the similarity between the underpinning he has given his ecclesiology and Schleiermacher's panentheism?

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[1] Ibid., pp. 247f.

[2] Ibid., p. 513. Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780-1849) elaborated his notion of the Christian _Gemeingefühl_ as the basis of doctrinal and moral formulae in _Lehrbuch der christlichen Dogmatik_ (Berlin, 1813 and 1816) and _Darstellungen der theologischen Ethik_ (Berlin, 1819 and 1823). Together with Schleiermacher and Neander, he formed the theological faculty of the University of Berlin for the first nine years of its existence. Much of his work moved along lines parallel to Schleiermacher, and his concern with

A communal spirit is, according to Schleiermacher, "that which unites a natural, not artificially constructed, moral person, its characteristic mutual love which is typical of the common shape of its aspirations."[1] For a Christian redemption means incorporation into this communal spirit. This is what we have seen Schleiermacher call a "mystical" perspective on the redemption worked in Christ, a use of the term very similar to Möhler's. "Everyone existing in the state of Christian sanctification is conscious of himself in his union with those likewise motivated by the communal spirit which he must attribute not to nature, but to grace."[2] This communal spirit must be attributed to grace because it is the new life introduced by Christ, a life which can not be explained by any combination of causes within human history prior to Christ's appearance. It is not like the innovative ideas or revolutionary changes in life styles introduced by others, just as Christ is not like any other. For others

> are only partially beginners of a new life and only comparatively speaking do they begin something new which, viewed from another angle, seems only gradually to develop out of something old. By contrast, the new life proceeding from the Redeemer is not only a whole reality which extends beyond everything human, but is

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the basis of ecclesiology was in fact inspired by the latter's preaching, according to their mutal friend Friedrich Lücke (cited by Barth, p. 484).

[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:433.

[2] Ibid.

> also totally new and absolutely could not have developed from anything prior to it.[1]

Yet this communal spirit is refracted in as many ways as there are members of the community and so persons motivated by it. The comparison is made with the way in which a particular national spirit is related to an individual member of the nation. Such a spirit is the extension of the individual with his special combination of abilities and experiences, while he, in turn, is the particularization of the national spirit, its embodiment. Thus,

> the new life of the individual as a personal reality is nothing other than the Christian communal spirit dwelling within him viewed in relation to his determinate spiritual capacities and become conscious of itself, and the Christian communal spirit in the individual is nothing other than his new personal life viewed in regard to its basis and development and become conscious of itself.[2]

The communal spirit is lived within and expands the individual life. Each believer is the incarnation of the communal spirit in union with his own life.

Accordingly, it is not surprising to find Schleiermacher bluntly state, " The Holy Spirit is the union of the divine essence with human nature under the form of the communal spirit which enlivens the life of the totality of believers."[3] And this seems as straightforward a corroboration for Möhler's reading of Schleiermacher's teaching as could be desired. But there is a further qualification which Schleiermacher added in the revised second edition of the Glaubenslehre which heightens an element less obviously present in the first edition. The second volume of the second edition appeared, of course, six years after Einheit in der Kirche, but it is useful to us in determining how correctly Möhler had interpreted Schleiermacher on this point in the first edition. In the second edition Schleiermacher notes that the objection may be raised that his speaking of the Holy Spirit as the Christian communal spirit may seem to be an entirely different use of the term "Holy Spirit" from that found in the New Testament.

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[1] Ibid., 2:195f.

[2] Ibid., 2:434.

[3] Ibid., 2:447.

> But the thought-forms that have arisen owing to the place of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of the Trinity (partly to explain it, partly to refute it, as, for example, when the Holy Spirit is represented as a separate higher Being indeed, but only a created one) ought none of them to be taken as equivalent to New Testament statements, which as a matter of fact represent the Holy Spirit to us as always and only in believers.[1]

Schleiermacher does not preclude other understandings of the term "Holy Spirit." Mention is made of other ways of thinking about the Spirit which have grown up in relation to trinitarian doctrine, and they are not immediately ruled out as invalid. But they are not the New Testament meaning for the term which is, he maintains, the same as his Gemeingeist. It may be objected that Schleiermacher leaves no room for any other understanding of the Spirit, notably that of the Spirit as an inner-trinitarian Person, that the Gemeingeist is in fact the only Holy Spirit presented in the Glaubenslehre. And such an objection is precisely the point at issue. Schleiermacher is not concerned with a Spirit utterly transcendent, existing in perfect aseity. He neither affirms explicitly nor denies such a Spirit here. But he does affirm that that Spirit is not the Holy Spirit of which the New Testament speaks. The Gemeingeist is the only Holy Spirit which we experience, which we discover in Christian consciousness. The inner-trinitarian Spirit is, like the doctrine of the Trinity of which it is a constituent, not an immediate datum of the consciousness of the believing community, but rather a derived position designed to defend what are data.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 2nd ed., trans., p. 562.

> The ecclesiastical doctrinal statement, however, that in the one and undivided divine Essence there are three Persons of the same essence and the same power has not, thus fashioned, equal value with other doctrines of faith properly speaking, but is only a composite statement.[1]

Schleiermacher does not claim that the Gemeingeist is the only Holy Spirit, but that it is the only Holy Spirit which is the proper subject of a dogmatic statement, the only Spirit that is an intrinsic element of Christian consciousness when that consciousness is unpacked in dogmatics, in short, the only Spirit that matters.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:688.

Möhler's statement, then, that Schleiermacher identified the Christian Gemeingeist with the Holy Spirit is in practice correct. That sets the context for the second question: does Möhler avoid this identification? Certainly he states his intention to do so. He clearly differentiates between the transcendent Spirit and the spirit of the community in that the latter is the effect of the former. In commenting on the Shepherd of Hermas, he writes:

> This image [Christ as the keystone] which Peter had already used expresses very beautifully that, through the Holy Spirit, Christ enlivens the faithful who are held together through the Spirit and bound into one whole, so that the one spirit of the faithful is the effect of the one divine Spirit.[1]

This is taken up again in the first appendix to Einheit in der Kirche. Möhler is clear in his distinction: the Gemeingeist is created by the Holy Spirit and is the product of the Spirit's work.

But in practice that distinction loses its importance. In the first section of the first chapter, we find this statement: "Briefly these effects of the Holy Spirit in us were presented as a rule in this way: that he communicates himself to the faithful essentially (ousiōdōs)."[2] He adds immediately that this is "a mysticism which is grounded in the essence of Catholicism, and with which its unique way of formulating the holy Eucharist stands in the closest connection." This connection is taken up again in an appendix, where it becomes clear that Möhler intends to draw a parallel between the Spirit's presence in the Church and the union of Christ with the participant in the Eucharist, which is "living, real, and substantial."[1] The first appendix expands this notion "according to the doctrine of the Fathers."

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 8.

[2] Ibid., pp. 5f.

> Under the term "Holy Spirit" in so far as he is within the Church was understood not a power dwelling, as it were, outside man, not something present to the faithful simply as _energeia_, but _ousiōdōs_, essentially present within them, and so conferring holiness and divine sonship which are its proper effects (according to Romans 8, 15-16).[2]

Möhler attempts to maintain a slippery position similar to and rooted in the panentheism which he shares with Schleiermacher and which is in danger of sliding into pantheism. It is precisely the "hopeless pantheism" which he sees underlying Schleiermacher's identification of Holy Spirit and _Gemeingeist_ that Möhler tries to avoid.

> Apart from the particular reasons proper to Christians, this [essential indwelling of the Spirit] has its absolutely universal ground in the fact that God can not be thought of as operating in the fashion of men and finite beings generally who always exist outside of those things which they produce. It is not so with God. Where he works, he himself necessarily is, and what is has its existence only in so far as it is grounded in God. So Augustine, in the Confessions 4, 12, says very beautifully of the creation of the world by God, "Non enim fecit, atque abiit, _sed ex illo in illo sunt_." If we must accept this, then how much more must we affirm that _the life of the saints_ derives its innermost existence and essence not in relation to God yet outside

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[1] Ibid., p. 244.

[2] Ibid., p. 243.

> him, but rather because of and within God, that God is its ground? "The Holy Spirit is in us," "dwells in the faithful"--expressions which constantly recur in holy scripture, albeit not always in the same sense, and which mean nothing other than that every true good is a derivation from the primal Good and is grounded in him.[1]

The language is that of section 31 in which Möhler revealed the panentheist underpinning of his ecclesiology. There he maintained that the universe is the revelation of God; it alone reveals him completely because it alone is co-extensive with him. But it is not identical with him. The total system of finite causality, as Schleiermacher had recognized, explains every particular within the system. But the whole system as system is dependent on God's activity. Thus God does exist in his universe. Its existence, its operation, is totally dependent on his preservation of it, is co-extensive with it, but not identical with it. Möhler's comparison between the indwelling of the Spirit in the Church and the creation and preservation of the universe by God suggests that the community of believers is co-extensive with the Spirit but not identical with it. The Gemeingeist of the Church would then be aligned with the Spirit, its extent would be equivalent to that of the Spirit, it would be the full revelation of the Spirit, but would also be dependent upon the Spirit. Thus the transcendence of the divine Spirit is maintained with regard to the Gemeingeist, just as the transcendence of God is maintained with regard to the universe. But panentheism, unless very cautiously treated, is an inherently unstable position, always in danger of tilting toward pantheism, of collapsing God and the world, or, in this instance, Spirit and Church, into one another. Möhler has distinguished between the Holy Spirit and the Christian communal spirit on the basis of his panentheist *Weltanschauung*, but *in practice* they become indistinguishable. He has stated the difference between himself and Schleiermacher, but in the elaboration of his ecclesiology that difference tends toward the vanishing point. Once again, the *Gemeingeist* is the only Holy Spirit *that matters*.

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[1] Ibid.

This tendency is clearly observable in the summary of the first chapter. It was noted earlier that the third corollary of the axiom which encapsulates the first chapter, that ecclesial unity consists in "an immediate life which is always awakened by the divine Spirit and which preserves and furthers itself through the living reciprocity of the faithful," concerns the marks of the Church.

> The predicates of the Church, one, holy, true, are in their essence, one. The *Holy* Spirit is also the Spirit of *Truth*, and holiness and love are the same. Or: the principle which unites believers, love, is identical with holiness. Love is the source of truth. Or: the knowledge of the Christian consists in the rays of his *holy love*, arising out of his feelings, focused through the understanding, clarified and classified in concepts. Since oneness, truth, and holiness are gifts of the Holy Spirit, this means that, if he is always in the Church, it too can never cease to be one, holy, and true.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 22.

Möhler has taken the communicatio idiomatum and applied it to the Church. This is the import of his insistence that the Spirit is present essentially in the Church. As the attributes properly predicated of the divine nature of Christ may be applied to the human nature, and vice versa, because the person of Jesus unites both the divine and human natures, so the attributes properly predicated of the Holy Spirit may be applied to the Church, because in it the Spirit and the community of believers are united essentially. The Church has in fact become the incarnation of the Spirit as Jesus is the incarnation of the Son. If one can attribute to the Gemeingeist the proper predicates of the Spirit, then, in the experience of believers, the Spirit and the Gemeingeist have become one and the same and Möhler is, in fact, in the same position as Schleiermacher: the Gemeingeist is the Spirit that matters.

Indeed, Möhler could not escape that position when he engaged in his own Bewusstseinstheologie. By making the community the locus of the experience of the Spirit, he opened the possibility that the only Spirit is that experienced by the community. Panentheism is a delicate instrument by which to prevent that possibility being realized.

Pluralism: the Maintenance of the Individual within the Community

Möhler's attempt in Einheit in der Kirche to resolve the tension between personal religious experience and the historical Church by the enlargement of the domain of the Spirit to the community is rooted in and dependent upon his panentheism. His resolution of the related tension of internal reality and external form within the religious community rests on the change from considering internal reality as idea to viewing it as organic life. One way in which to see the benefit of that move from idea to life is to observe Möhler's treatment of the question of heresy. Drey, in the Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, had found heresies to be explicable only as errors, mistakes pure and simple. By making the center of Christianity life, Möhler was able to incorporate heresy into the development of that life, not as necessary, but as understandable.

The third chapter of Einheit in der Kirche, "Plurality without Unity," is largely concerned with the question of heretical and schismatic groups within the Christian community. The chapter begins with Möhler's unequivocal affirmation of the superiority of life to all its conceptualizations.

> Christianity intended to construct on the foundation of a new, holy, and therefore necessarily communal life a new system of thought about God, the world and mankind, as the old way of thinking had grown out of the old pagan life. This was precisely opposed to all philosophical schools up to that time in which views and principles had been advanced concerning the subjects of thought acknowledged as most important. They had tried to work on life through a system of concepts. But they remained within the old life, even when they distanced themselves from it in their concepts--an irrefutable proof that concepts alone establish no enduring force in life. Antiquity could not produce a new life, in

> part because the thought was foreign to it (Socrates being a prelude to Christianity) that it must be begun with a conversion of life, but still more because they would have had to produce a product better than they themselves were.[1]

It is this principle of new life in Christianity which provides the experience the consciousness of which yields the conceptual understanding which the ancients sought, a "new system of thought about God, the world, and mankind."

Möhler notes five elements of heresy. First, the exaltation of unrestricted freedom of investigation and of thought indicates that the truth must be found either in the remote past of the community's history since which it has been obscured and forgotten or in abstruse reaches of speculation, but not in the life of the Church available to and lived by its humblest members. Second, as a consequence of the first, there is the presumption that Christ and the essence of Christianity can be grasped with the greatest certainty apart from the community, since it has been accepted that the community may have lost or never have experienced that essence. Third, faith and love are separated since one can be a true member of the community and not have the true faith. The presumption here is that faith is purely an affair of the intellect, a matter of Verstand rather than Vernunft. Möhler expanded this point just prior to the publication of Einheit with the addition of a discussion of all heresy as being "theoretically Pelagian," in that the separation of love and truth, of community and faith, indicates that one and ultimately both, must be the result of human endeavor. Fourth, heresy presumes the separation of scripture from the community in all the foregoing, and thus the separation of the letter from the spirit. Fifth, the early Christian community is exalted as the standard by which all is judged, the point at which scripture is understood, the moment when the new principle of life was pure. This rests on the assumption that Christianity is not in fact a life which is ongoing and therefore to be found in the present community, but a dead conceptual system.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 57.

All five of these points regarding heresy contain two related elements: a separatist tendency and the denial of the vital nature of Christianity. Given the fact of the community as the realm of the Spirit, the first of these elements obviously is destructive of Christian feeling which is the basis of faith. That feeling is the self-consciousness of the living being, a peculiar self-consciousness because the being is animated by a peculiar life. Möhler speaks of separatism, however, not mere tension or contrast. Tension is necessary for life. "It is emphasized that the secret of all true life is that it arises in the mutual penetration of things opposed to one another."[2] This opposition is within the living being, between parts of the organism, not between one organism and another. Thus Möhler notes that this mutual opposition exists only because these opposites are rooted in the same reality. He gives the example of a choir whose harmony is produced by contrasting voices.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 59-63.

[2] Ibid., p. 152.

But having emphasized the community's oneness of life, how is opposition or contrast possible within it? Once again the model of organic life is fruitfully combined with the ideal of community in Möhler's ecclesiology. For it allows due importance to the role of the individual within the Church. This forms the central concern of chapter four, "Unity in Plurality," which both complements the discussion of heresy and sets the context for the second half of Einheit in der Kirche on Church order. The very first words of the chapter indicate the way in which the principle of organic life serves to guarantee the individual and the community in Möhler's thought.

> If the Catholic principle binds all believers into a unity, still the individuality of the particular person must not be cancelled out, for the particular should perdure as a living member within the total body of the Church. The very life of the individual is dependent upon his uniqueness which consequently must not disappear within the whole. Indeed, the whole would itself cease to be a living reality if the unique life of the individuals, out of which alone it can arise, should be lost. Precisely through the manifold particularities of individuals, through their free development and untrammeled activity, it becomes a living organism, fully thriving and flourishing.[1]

The contrast of the individuals within the community makes the community into a living whole. Otherwise it is simply a dead multiplicity. Möhler has recourse to the Pauline example of the organs of the body which cannot serve the needs of the whole by duplicating one another. These contrasting particulars complete and illuminate one another. The tension between them is creative, not destructive. Each individual lives the common life, each shares in the Christian _Gemeingeist_, but the expression of that life, the way in which it is experienced, the connections which it establishes within the individual, all are directly dependent on the unique combination of elements which make up a particular character. Möhler calls this individuality "a form of the spiritual" shaped by time and place and circumstance.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 114.

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[1] Ibid., p. 146. Geiselmann makes one of his rare references to Schleiermacher's influence on Möhler precisely with regard to this point: "Thus, in his interpretation of the Christian man, Möhler took over Schleiermacher's fundamental discovery in his _Monologen_, who also speaks of uniqueness, which he understands in this way, 'that every man is to express humanity in a unique way, in a unique mixture of its elements.' In the great influence which Schleiermacher exerted on the Möhler of _Einheit_, this point is clear beyond question." J. R. Geiselmann, _Die theologische Anthropologie Johann Adam Möhlers: Ihr geschichtlicher Wandel_ (Freiburg: Herder, 1955), p. 109.

Möhler's application of this relationship of the individual to the race to the question of the individual Christian's relation to the Church is also presaged in the _Glaubenslehre_: "Thus the reconciling activity of Christ is, _first of all_, the foundation of a blessed communal feeling for all believers in which perishes their former personality as the confinement of their sympathy within the individuality of their life to which every sympathetic feeling for others and for the whole was subordinate. Out of this communal feeling then, the manner of perception characteristic of sympathy within the domain of the higher life is constructed, so that, with respect to the whole way of conceiving one's life, an old man is put off and a new man is put on, and so here too the action of Christ is person-forming." _Glaubenslehre_, 1st ed., 2:262.

The enemy of individuality is egoism. As egoism destroys the communal life, so too it distorts and disfigures the particular character of each individual. The community and the individual are perfectly balanced poles: what is good for one is good for both, what destroys one, destroys both. "Whoever attempts to render universal this [particular character of the individual] confuses the material with the spiritual, the conditioned with the unconditioned."[1] This is the error of the heretic. He casts the community in the mold of his own personality. He exalts his "form of the spiritual" as the form, the Gemeingeist itself.

> This is the nature of egoism, that everything must be formed to accord with it and that it must impress its nature on everything, so that the whole order of the world and of salvation is to become a reflection of its own partiality. This is the nature of any heresy and the basis of its own destruction: it attempts to exalt the limited individuality of its master to universality. Consequently, what was peculiar to him and a few like-dispositioned persons, under altered circumstances, must vanish as unspiritual, untrue, and unreal.[2]

Life is dependent on opposition within the organism. Individuality provides a Gegensatz, an opposition, a contrast. Heresy seeks to deny the creative opposition by identifying the individual with the universal, thus becoming a Widerspruch, a contradiction, a hostile opponent.

Thus heresies are not simply mistakes, as they were for Drey in Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, nor are they necessary for the life of the Church, as Möhler himself had earlier held.[1] Heresy is individuality gone wrong, Gegensatz become Widerspruch. It is an imbalance between community and individuality, between the Gemeingeist and its particular form. It is not inherent in the Church's development but is always a possibility. The life of the community is healthy only so long as the tension between its individual expressions is maintained, i.e., the mediation of the Gemeingeist through the particular characters of the members. This is, as Möhler says, "the secret of all true life."

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 146.

[2] Ibid., p. 147.

The life of the community does not, then, exist apart from the individual lives of the members. It is the totality of those lives, each of which expresses the communal life in one of its possibilities. Since those individual characteristics are formed by temporal and geographic factors in that they are shaped by external circumstances,[2] the Gemeingeist itself is tied to those external circumstances. The way it is expressed, the change in form of those expressions from age to age and place to place, truly makes a difference, for it is the variety of those forms of expressions which establishes the healthy opposition on which the Gemeingeist thrives. Möhler had given in section 31 a basic principle which underlies this relationship of the community and the individual.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 508: "The concept of the Catholic Church is as old as Christianity; it first came to clear consciousness through its opposite [Gegensatz], heresies."

[2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 146.

> For everything which is truly ideal is likewise real. . . . Consequently the community of believers is in the proper sense ideal only to the extent that it is real, just as it could only become real because it is ideal.[1]

This principle, that the life of the community must be real, must concretely exist if it is to be ideal, and vice versa, is the foundation on which his "secret of all true life" rests. The individual makes real and concrete the life of the whole because he expresses it in the forms of time and space. But what the individual expresses is intelligible only because it is common to all. Concretization is necessary, whether in doctrine, cult or constitution, for the Gemeingeist, the ideal, to be real. Those institutions are of enduring value and meaning because what they express, the life of the community which is mutual love, is ideal.

Möhler explored his solution to the problem of the dichotomy between personal religious experience and community in the first half of Einheit in der Kirche. The enlargement of the arena of religious experience to the community has led him to the identification of the referent of that experience as a new life-principle. He has preserved the intrinsic value of the individual in treating him not as a willful determiner of or limiting factor on the new life-principle, but as a unique recipient and expression of it. It is this principle which provides the organizing framework of the second half of his 1825 work in which it is employed to resolve the inner-outer dialectic. From this Möhler derives Church office, whether of bishop, metropolitan, or pope.

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[1] Ibid., p. 101.

Community and Institution

The first part of Einheit in der Kirche revolves about the expansion of the locus of the Holy Spirit from the individual to the community. But the Spirit-filled Church united by the communal love of its members was not, Möhler recognized, immediately identifiable with the Church of the hierarchy which had been the dominant image of his own lectures in canon law. The first half of his book had dealt with the difficulty presented by Sailer's Erlebnistheologie, the question of the Church's role in the relationship between the individual and the Spirit of God. The second half deals with the problem which we have seen present in the contrasting ecclesiologies of Möhler's lectures and Theologische Quartalschrift articles, the relation between the Gemeinschaft formed by the indwelling Spirit and the Gesellschaft of the historical, hierarchically ordered ecclesiastical structure. The resolution is provided by the organic principle which makes the external the necessary expression of the internal.

The Identity of the Visible abd Invisible Church

This mediation of the ideal and the real is a theme common to the Catholic Tübingen school, finding its root in Drey's use of Schelling. The latter had written that Christ

> goes back into the realm of the invisible and promises in his place not the principle which comes into the finite realm and remains in the finite, but the Spirit, the ideal principle which instead leads the finite back to the infinite and, as such, is the light of the new world. In this basic idea all the characteristic marks of Christianity are linked together. According to its ideal orientation, to state the union of the infinite and the finite objectively through a symbol, like Greek religion, is impossible. All symbolization falls back upon the subject, and so the resolution of the opposition which is not to be perceived externally but purely internally remains a mystery, a secret. The antinomy of the divine and the natural, which permeates everything, is overcome only through the subject's distinctive ability to think both, in an incomprehensible fashion, as one.[1]

That achievement of the subject, to think the infinite and the finite as one, must not, however remain within the subject. It demands objectification. But that objectification remains the activity of the subject, not the discovery by the subject of some objective expression of that incomprehensible unity.

> The ideas of a religion directed toward the intuition of the infinite in the finite must be expressed preeminently in existing reality, whereas the ideas of the opposite [kind of religion], in which all symbolization belongs to the subject alone, can be made objective only

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[1] *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums*, *F. W. J. von Schellings samtliche Werke*, 14 vol. ed. K. F. A. Schelling (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1856-1861), 5:292-293.

> through action. The original symbol of any intuition of God in [the latter] is history. But this is endless and immeasurable. It must accordingly be represented through a similarly infinite and yet limited manifestation, which is itself not simply real, like the state, but ideal, and which proclaims as an immediate presence the unity of all in the spirit in the midst of their separation into individuality. This symbolized intuition is the Church as a living work of art.[1]

Two chief characteristics of Möhler's attempted resolution in the second part of Einheit in der Kirche find their roots here. First, the peculiar activity of the subject of which Schelling writes, to think the divine and the natural, the infinite and the finite, the ideal and the real, as one, is the foundation of the conviction that the ideal exists only as the real and the real is intelligible, and so truly existent, only as the ideal. Consequently, for both Schelling and Möhler, the ideal must be concretely embodied. The ideal principle must seek real, historical, communal expression. Second, it is clear that the ideal remains primary both as originating force and as goal. Thus Schelling's Spirit is "not the principle which comes into the finite realm and remains in the finite"; it is "the ideal principle which instead leads the finite back to the infinite." It is the ideal which seeks and thus brings about reality; only then can the real be said to seek ideality. The ideal is both beginning and end, for the ideal becomes real in order to lead the real to ideality. So also for Möhler it is the inner life of the community of believers which seeks expression, not the concrete reality of the institution which generates the internal life. The goal of the Church is not the manifestation of the Christian Gemeingeist, it is that inner life of the community itself to which all external expressions lead. The ideal and the real, the Gemeingeist and the institution, are to be thought as one, are mutually dependent, but for Möhler, as for Schelling, the ideal takes precedence.

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[1] Ibid.

> If accordingly the Church must be envisioned as the external product of an inner constructive energy, as the body of a spirit fashioning itself, so it is also beyond question and, in fact, necessarily this institution through which and in which true faith and true love are maintained and advanced. For since one communal, true life is at work throughout the totality of the faithful, while such a life is conditioned by two factors, spiritual force and its outer organic manifestation, so, as has been said, the Christian spirit and the Church must be related as spirit and body in man. To be sure, the spirit in man is the animating, life-giving principle. But only through this does it come to self-consciousness, and this is demonstrated in that it fashions for itself the corporeal organism through the destruction of which the human spirit itself would lose its earthly existence. Just so with the Christian spirit: it would only (if I may so express myself) flutter about in doubtful, uncertain manifestations without recognizing itself as Christian and without making itself known to others, precisely because it would have no real existence. For this reason Paul calls the Church "the support and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3, 15), the bearer of the truth because it is the substratum of the Spirit. But since the divine Spirit, through whose communication the Christian spirit comes into being for the faithful, can and must never be lost, so too it can never abandon the body by which it is borne on even to the end of the world. And so faith is transmitted exclusively in it. Furthermore, it is the operations, organs, and functions of the body through which the human spirit works and creates. Likewise the Spirit dwelling in the Church generates organs for its activity. Consequently the Spirit living in believers and the Church absolutely belong together, they are conjoined and inseparable, so that, if it was said above that the communal

> life of the faithful depends upon two factors, this must be understood to mean that these can be distinguished only in process of reflection, but never in life. It must be phrased in this fashion: the activating power given to believers by the Holy Spirit forms for itself the visible body of the Church and the visible Church contains and supports this higher force which has been given to it and communicates it to others. For this reason it is by no means merely an institution, which is always related to the goal to be accomplished by it as a means to an end. Here everything is related as the limb to the whole body.[1]

Neither the Gemeingeist nor the visible ecclesiastical institution can exist apart from the other, but there is no question which takes priority. The inseparability of the two "in life" provides Möhler with a new way of maintaining that constant concern of post-Tridentine Catholic ecclesiology--the visibility of the Church. There can be no separation of the visible from the invisible Church, because either one by itself is an abstraction. A visible Church in and of itself, a congregation of believers regarded solely as a human society, even if divinely instituted, would have no truth, no inner intelligibility. A purely invisible, spiritual Church, a Church existing only in the mind of God, would have no reality, no possibility of affecting human lives. Möhler has, in a sense, transcended the classical Catholic-Protestant debate about the relationship of the invisible to the visible Church, in the same way that Schelling and the idealists sought to pass beyond the confines of the epistemological problem of the relation of the subject to the object. The solution is to discover that there is no relationship, there is only identity. The problem does not arise out of life, but out of thought. The separation of the invisible and visible Churches is not a question which arises on the level of Christian living, but on the level of reflection on Christian life. The resolution of the question passes over again into the realm of life from pure thought. That life may be heightened and becomes more keenly appreciated by the process of analysis. But it is life, not thought, which is primary.[1] Thus their distinction may be valid "in process of reflection, but never in life."

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 170-171.

This leads Möhler to the rejection of the invisible-visible polarity in ecclesiology, the mistake of classical Protestantism as he understood it. That rejection, however, came on the basis of the mistaken idealism of the separation of the two.

> From the concept of an institution, the related idea of a mechanism can not be separated. But the Church is a living organism. . . . But regarding heresies, we have only to note that they could not, as a result of all their principles, accept any visible Church. A concept begets no life: no communal concept, no communal life, even provided that there was such [a concept] among them.[2]

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[1] Despite the popular image of idealist philosophy, the same may be said of Schelling, who, unlike Fichte, did not seek to dissolve the real in the ideal, or nature in thought, but to hold both together as ultimately one.

[2] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 171f. Möhler had prepared an entire section in which he took up the inconsistency of the

This theme will be taken up again by Möhler in his defense of Symbolik against F. C. Baur, save that then it will be argued not on the basis of the priority of life to thought, but on the basis of differing estimates of the necessity of historical revelation, estimates which vary with differing formulations of the relationship of the natural and the supernatural.

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classical heresies' attempt to support a visible Church on the basis of a purely "conceptual" union of the Spirit with the community of believers. Included in that section, reduced in the final printed text to the few lines quoted, was a footnote of some interest, which followed from the statement that the Catholic doctrine maintains a "real union" between Christ and the faithful through the Holy Spirit. Möhler states that this indicates why Catholicism must maintain the reality of Christ's presence in the Eucharist (Möhler, Einheit, p. 490 n.): "In the Lutheran Church the doctrine of Christ's real presence was inconsistently retained, while the spirit of that Church fostered another view. In fact, the longer it perdured, the more clearly had the spirit of that system to communicate itself to individuals, so that now it can be said that (among the better educated) it is almost the universal belief that in the Eucharist only the remembrance of Christ is celebrated (i.e., we are united with him merely in a conceptual way. Schleiermacher, who has a different formulation of the Eucharist, must also construct the Church differently, or because he has constructed the Church differently, also maintains a different life in this regard)." It is noteworthy that, without elaborating further on the point, Möhler was careful, while classing the Lutherans together with those who held a merely recollective theory of Eucharistic presence and using them to illustrate a point regarding the classical heresies, to put Schleiermacher in a completely different class. It is also significant that the Berlin theologian is cited as possessing a different Eucharistic theory, a different ecclesiology, and a different construction of the Christian communal life. Once again the unique position which Schleiermacher held in Möhler's thought is clear.

Ecclesial Office as Personified Love

In 1825, however, Möhler's interest is not in the differing doctrinal viewpoints of Catholics and Protestants. Indeed, in the very foundations of Einheit in der Kirche itself, as we have seen, he was deeply indebted to one of the most distinguished of his Reformed contemporaries. Instead, his attention is directed "to demonstrate what are now the operations, organs, and functions through which the Church-body proves that it is such, through which the inner unity of life is maintained and binds all together within it and affects everything outside it, as these have been formed in the ages before us."[1] The four chapters of the second part of his work are concerned with three offices and four levels of unity. Those four levels are unity within the local Church or diocese, among several dioceses or in the province, among all the provinces or the unity of the whole episcopacy, and the unity of the whole Church expressed in the Roman primacy. Accordingly the three offices to which he addresses himself are bishop, metropolitan, and pope.

Dominical Institution in a Pneumatocentric Ecclesiology

The basis of Möhler's construction of ecclesial office is given succinctly when he treats the episcopal office.

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[1] Ibid., p. 172.

> As soon as this constitutive holy principle becomes active among them, all believers feel themselves drawn to one another and struggling toward union in such a fashion that these inner drives experience no satisfaction until they are seen expressed in an image. Thus the bishop is the union of believers in a particular locality become perceptible, their personified love for one another, the manifestation and living center of Christian affection striving for union, and, because this is given permanent expression in the bishop, the actual love of Christians having come to consciousness as well as the means to maintain it.[1]

With constant reference to Ignatius of Antioch and Cyprian, Möhler can actually write that "the Church is in the bishop and the bishop in the Church." Union with the local Church means union with the bishop. It is to be observed that the animating love of the community comes to consciousness in the person of the bishop. Thus the creation of the episcopal office was not a deliberate act of policy on the part of the first generations of Christians. It was an unconscious or reflex activity, and as such, necessary. "Consequently this central point is so necessary that without it the communal bond is unthinkable, and the concept of one Church is defined in this fashion, that it is a people united in one bishop."[2]

The question must accordingly be raised whether the episcopal office, or indeed any ecclesial office, can be said to be of divine institution. Möhler's answer is of significance for the understanding of the panentheist underpinning which he has given his ecclesiology in his 1825 work.

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[1] Ibid., p. 178.

[2] Ibid., p. 179.

> If in the fashion mentioned, however, the bishop is a product of the community which consequently selects him, he still does not act at the behest of the people, nor is his office an arbitrary one, arising out of human agreement. It is of positive and divine origin (as when one says that love and faith arise from within and must be a free product of the human spirit; nevertheless they are positive). Earlier we demonstrated that the apostles themselves everywhere ordained bishops and therefore it is divine law through which their office is founded. In Acts 20, 28 Paul admonishes the elders summoned to Miletus "to watch over themselves and the whole flock over which the Holy Spirit has placed them as bishops to pasture the Church of God." If, therefore, it was stated above that the bishop is a product of the community, the inner meaning of this is that the higher demand according to which it acts in order to create for itself a central focus for its love is not of human origin, since after all man is incapable of generating this love. It is a work of the Holy Spirit and likewise so is the episcopal office.[1]

The episcopal office is divinely instituted because the love of the community which is personified in the bishop is the product of the Holy Spirit. The Christian Gemeingeist is not identical with the Spirit of God, Möhler has been at pains to point out, but neither is it human. The Gemeingeist is a product of the Spirit's activity, the effect of his indwelling, but an effect so closely identified with its cause that the drive of the Gemeingeist to embody itself and the office which corresponds to that drive can both be attributed directly to the Spirit. "As from this perspective a demand brought about by the Holy Spirit creates the bishop, so from another perspective it is likewise this same Holy Spirit who satisfies it."[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 182f.

[2] Ibid., p. 184.

It is also striking how sharply the pneumatocentrism of Möhler's ecclesiology comes to the fore in his treatment of ecclesial office. While strongly maintaining the divine origin of the institution of the office of bishop, he does not trace that founding to any historical action of Christ. Certainly Christ had called apostles and the apostles had appointed bishops, but Möhler does not indicate that the episcopal office can be traced to Christ. Later, when treating of the primacy in the Church, he writes:

> As we would consider the bishops a purely human production if their institution were not apostolic or, better, had not derived from Christ himself at whose command and in whose Spirit the apostles acted, so we would be inclined to consider the center-point of the whole Church, if such is found in history, as a human work in the case that its foundation were not found sketched out in the history of Jesus and the apostles.[1]

This seems, indeed, to indicate that both the Petrine and the episcopal offices are traceable directly to the historical Jesus. Yet immediately following this passage, in a lengthy note, he discusses the patristic understanding of Matthew 16, 18 and John 21, 15-17, the texts usually cited in support of the Petrine primacy, and concludes that "the primacy cannot be directly grounded through these citations."[2] The seeming inconsistency is resolved if one notes that the primacy is "sketched out" (vorgezeichnet) in the activity of Jesus. The episcopacy "derived from" (abstammte) the historical Jesus. In neither case is Christ said to found the office.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 228f.

[2] Ibid., p. 229 n.

This reluctance to speak of direct dominical institution is the result of Möhler's pneumatocentrism. For the Church itself does not originate in the incarnation, but in the descent of the Spirit. The Church begins after the ascension of the Risen Lord to the right hand of the Father when he fulfills his promise to send his Spirit. "The continuous existence of the divine Spirit among men had thus begun with the apostles, who received him immediately."[1] If the Church is the community of those enlivened by the Spirit, there was no Church until the Spirit was bestowed. The activity of Jesus recounted in the gospels can only "sketch out," i.e., prefigure, the Church. Thus the call and empowering of the twelve is not the creation of the episcopal office. After the event of Pentecost, when the Spirit-endendered Gemeingeist of the Christian community requires personified expression, the creation of bishops by the apostles entails the further exercise of the office of teaching and leadership to which chosen disciples of Jesus had been summoned in his earthly ministry. So episcopacy "derives from" apostleship, but it is not created in the latter, for it could not be until the coming of the Spirit.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 10.

[2] In the text of Einheit in der Kirche which was written out by some other hand than Möhler's apparently in preparation for the printer, and which the author subsequently reworked, section 53 is considerably longer than in the final printed version. Here Möhler turned his attention to

In this pneumatocentric ecclesiology not only the historical Jesus, but the glorified Christ stands outside the Church. It is not the earthly activity of Jesus which founds

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the magisterium of ecclesial office and maintained that one must affirm the divine character of the teaching office if one holds that the doctrine which it guards and explains is divine in origin. To deny the one is to deny the other. In the course of this we read: "The strict connection between the view of the magisterium as a divine institution and the maintenance of the doctrine itself as divine holds them together even more closely than one might think at first glance. While the Catholic Church holds fast to the position that the episcopacy is instituted immediately by Christ and the continuance of the divine Church is dependent upon the existence of the divinely ordained episcopacy, it likewise holds fast to the doctrine entrusted to it by Christ" (Möhler, Einheit, p. 495). Here Möhler does speak of immediate institution of the episcopal office by Christ. Three points should be noted, however, in trying to understand this passage in accord with the rest of his work. First, the passage was deleted by Möhler and no such statement is found in the printed text. Second, although he does not use the phrase "instituted by Christ," Möhler does regard the episcopal office as "sketched out" by Christ in the commissioning of the apostles. And third, the context of the statement is an analogy between the magisterial authority of the bishop and Christian doctrine: as the one is divine in origin, so is the other. But earlier, Möhler had written that "Christian doctrine is the conceptual expression of the Christian spirit." "The inner spiritual life of the Christian, the work of the divine Spirit who enlivens the faithful, must seek an expression as soon as it is present; it must force itself into the external domain and proclaim itself, just as, on the other hand, it was communicated by means of words, by means of others proclaiming their faith (Romans 10, 17). Yet the inner reality had to be explained first, partly because interior faith is the root of exterior faith, partly because the former, rightly understood, is still given before the exterior faith, before doctrine" (ibid., p. 23). Thus doctrine, which is used as a parallel to magisterial office, is of divine origin in that it is the external expression of inner Christian life. Möhler elsewhere in his 1825 book makes exactly the same statement about ecclesial office. It would seem, therefore, that immediate institution by Christ and the community's self-expression of its Gemeingeist formed by Christ's Spirit are to be understood as equivalent in Möhler's thought.

the Church. Rather that activity, that mission of healing and teaching and sanctifying is the pattern for the Church, but not its initiation. The glorified Lord founds the Church but by acting from without, i.e., by sending the Spirit, and it is the Spirit who founds the Church from within by engendering the mutual love of Christ's followers, by creating the Gemeingeist of Christians. Möhler had stated in the Introduction:

> The Father sent the Son, and he the Spirit: so God came to us; in the reverse order we go to him: the Holy Spirit leads us to the Son, and he to the Father. I wanted to begin with what is the first in time in our process of becoming Christian.[1]

The Spirit, whose "continuous existence" among men is the Church, leads to Christ. Both as founder and as goal, Christ stands outside the Church.

> If we say simply, "The Church is the institution discussed," we would let it be understood by this that Christ has (if I may so express myself) forced his followers together, without creating an inner insistence within them which brought and held them together. So the Church would have existed earlier than the faithful. In fact, the Church would be something distinct from the faithful, outside them, as it were. Just as the divine principle communicated to believers which is in itself one generates unity of faith in those in whom it is established, so too it reveals itself as abolishing egoism and thus drawing and binding to one another all in whom it is found, uniting them into one great social unity, i.e., as forming one Church, whose bond, therefore, is love. For this alone leads together and unites and constructs. Thus when love was bestowed by the divine Spirit, together with it, at that same moment, the Church was founded.[2]

Ecclesial office is divinely instituted because it is the expression of the Gemeingeist of Christians which is itself the expression of the Holy Spirit. It is related to the historical mission of Jesus in that it corresponds to his activity which foreshadows it and provides the model for it. It is related to the glorified Christ in Heaven in that it is the necessary reflection, the product of the reflex activity, of the community formed by his Spirit and, as such, is integral to the goal of that community, eternal union with him and, through him, with the Father. It is instituted upon the apostles, but only after Pentecost when they entered upon their office.

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[1] Ibid., p. 3.

[2] Ibid., pp. 167f.

Authority: the Dialectic of Love and Law

Möhler regards the idea that the Church could be "something distinct from the faithful, outside them, as it were," as so unacceptable that he has no need to refute it. Certainly such a notion of the Church would not fit in the ecclesiology of Einheit in der Kirche. But the fact is that the Church in the person of one holding an ecclesial office, e.g., the bishop, has and must continue, in particular instances, to stand over against the individuals who make up the community. Those who are the personified love of the community, who embody the Gemeingeist, must occasionally rebuke and even discipline members of the community. Officeholders exercise authority. If that authority arises only out of the community, and if love is its only force, how can that authority be exercised against those within the community?

Before responding to that question, Möhler implicitly rejects another familiar answer. He has clearly indicated that he will not accept the idea of any authoritative office as given to the Church. Rather, all offices grow out of the Church and express its innermost reality. Thus he cannot trace the episcopacy back to the apostles as an office erected within the community. The office of bishop evolves--necessarily, to be sure, as he has asserted--out of the Church's life. Since that life is divine, the office is divinely founded. Once it has evolved it is modeled upon the apostles. But the episcopal office is not an authority distinct from the authority of the whole community in any way. It is not a juridical authority concomitant to a sacred or priestly office. For the priestly office belongs to the whole community. Differing gifts are bestowed upon the members of the Church in order to answer all the needs which it faces.[1] "Nevertheless one acknowledges in all Christians a priestly dignity."[2] Möhler refers to a passage in Origen's ninth homily on Leviticus and explains its meaning:

> These were the ideas which the ancient Church advanced on the universal priestly dignity of Christians and

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[1] Ibid., pp. 184ff. Section 53 is a working-out of the general principle announced at its beginning: a demand evoked by the Spirit is also satisfied by the Spirit. This provides the basis for the many gifts all of which are directed to the one end.

[2] Ibid., p. 186.

> their equality: all were to be united with God in the same fashion, through faith and purity of heart. But under no circumstances was the dignity of the Christian understood in such a way that the eternal ordinances of God within the Church are destroyed, and the organs of the community are nullified, and each believer is given over to self-interest, by which precisely the union with Christ itself is dissolved and the distinctive Christian dignity lost.[1]

All share in the priesthood because all offer themselves to God directly. What Möhler rejects here is the notion of any necessary mediator between Christ and the individual Christian. Each believer is directly united with Christ because he is directly united with the Church which is the embodiment of Christ's Spirit. Every individual shares directly in the Christian Gemeingeist, and thus requires no intermediary acting on his behalf with Christ. Nevertheless, "the eternal ordinances of God within the Church," "the organs of the community," cannot be ignored. The priesthood of all believers does not invalidate the distinction of offices within the Church because both are understood as the activity of the Spirit expressing itself through the communal spirit.

> Thus, taken all together, viewed keenly in accord with its innermost nature, the distinction between clergy and lay means nothing else but this, that it is a distinction, worked by the Holy Spirit, of gifts within the Church. There is necessarily a bond of unity among the faithful which is constructed only by means of organs and links of unity to which that distinction of gifts is exactly correspondent. Only in the ordering of everything to the community, and thus in the preservation of these organs is true Christian dignity secured.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 188f. [2] Ibid.

This distinction of gifts which corresponds to a distinction of offices must be preserved by the Church. But this obligation is not a burden placed upon the Church from without. It is the imperative of its own inner reality, the necessary expression of its nature. Consequently, the division of offices within the Church is not the admission of a coercive authority, it is the Church being what it is, expressing its deepest meaning, and so exercising its freedom.

> Because it is the result of love, the maintenance of these organs is the freest act of the Christian. Through them as the effects of the highest self-realization of the believer (because here all self-seeking is banished), the purest freedom must necessarily be preserved, and the existence of the Church is the living affirmation of the freedom of God's children, which holds sway within it.[1]

But this simply leads us back to our original question phrased in a new way. If the authority of a bishop or any "organ of unity" is the personified love of the community, how is it that that authority can be experienced within the Church as something "over against" the community? Or, in terms of the passage above, how can the authority of office which is the "highest self-realization" of each member of the community, his "purest freedom," be experienced as law or even coercive power?

In his first full-length draft of Einheit in der Kirche, Möhler included an observation which never found its way into the finished text:

In modern times those outside the Catholic Church have

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[1] Ibid., p. 189.

> decided that the people of former days were held in servitude by the priests of the time, that through the distinction which exists between clergy and laity, the freedom and dignity of the latter were destroyed. It is a remarkable thing to cite the fundamentals of the Catholic Church as they were enunciated in the ancient Church. What a high concept of the priestly dignity of all Christians, and of their true freedom as a result, we will maintain before an astonished present![1]

It is not that one class within the community sought to dominate the rest, that the clergy deliberately subjected the laity to their direction, according to Möhler. Rather it was a falling off of the whole community from the realization of its nature. Thus the answer to the question of how the office which is the expression of the community can be experienced as being in opposition to the community is to be found in a communal failure.

The origin of the episcopal office in the apostolic age (for Möhler is quite convinced that the apostles did appoint bishops) was the reflex activity of the communal spirit of love and unity. This identity of the bishop with the community is well-attested in the apostolic Fathers.

> The bishop was not therefore especially exalted because he was thoroughly identified with the community, and it was not imaginable apart from him just as he was not apart from it. He was still the pure product of its love, and it was still motivated purely by the power of its doctrine and its holy love. The presbyterium, or full number of priests of a Church, formed the intimate and immediate council of the bishop, men who, like the bishop, had been chosen from among the especially spiritual members. Apart from this body, as his senate, the bishop did nothing, indeed he was not allowed to do anything of importance.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 496, n. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 190.

But this happy picture changed. "But this original relation of the bishop to the community must have greatly altered once the character of the members of the community itself had been much changed." The first generations of Christians had been led to embrace the community by their own conviction of the truth of its gospel and the beauty of its life. But subsequent generations were "born Christians." The first generations had experienced the inner longing for salvation which Christianity held out; their descendents had never felt that yearning. Many, although members of the community, remained "fully foreign to Christianity." Others were drawn to the Church by unworthy motives. Still others "had grasped Christianity more with the understanding than with the heart" or had come to it in a momentary outpouring of emotion without being inwardly transformed into the new creation. This did not appear in its full consequences while the community was left at peace, but when persecution came the inner deterioration displayed how far it had progressed. This Möhler illustrates by the large number of the lapsed with whom Cyprian and the Church of his time had to deal.

> With Christians of such a character it could no longer be said of them, "They were of one heart and one mind," for where worldliness dominates, there is separation and disintegration. Now the bishop no longer emerged from the highest actualization of love working in and uniting all believers. Ever increasingly now he was related to the community as the law is to a man in whom conscience is powerless and profane.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 191.

The community's failure to remain true to itself, to be the expression of the Gemeingeist formed within it by the Holy Spirit, leads the bishop who was the expression of love which needed no law to become the guardian of law. Initially, when the Church was a love-community, questions of right need never have arisen, Möhler seems to imply. Justice was transcended by self-sacrificing love, quick in the service of others. When that love grows cold, the community must fall back upon justice to resolve those questions of mutual obligation which now appear. Previously the eager desire to serve could never have been experienced as obligation. Now law must rule, and he who personified love must now personify law.

> Law commanded now what was foreign to man. Now ever increasingly the bishop took the position where he more and more had to prescribe and perform what should be and should not be done, when his mere existence should have proclaimed what once was. Now more and more community and bishop drew apart and, to some extent, seemed like those who will different aims. In him Christianity had to speak--to those who at one time had desired to be Christian. Earlier holier times had proclaimed him the communal image of all, and so now, once again, he speaks to all and exhorts them. Thus he is the vocal embodiment of the first love which was lost, and does not let this disposition be obliterated, but generates anew what had generated him. How could we wish that the bishop now be the embodiment of his community, that his will and theirs be identical? As a result he now frequently appears to act without and against the will of the majority of the community, for only the few better members are on his side. He had to do so if the concerns of Christianity, if order and decorum, were not to suffer, indeed, if they were not to be destroyed.[1]

The office did not change, nor did its content. The reaction of the community changed toward it. Originally the Church had seen the reflection of its own communal love in the episcopal office, or, for that matter, in any ecclesial office, since presbyters, like bishops, were "chosen from among the especially spiritual members." Later it saw reflected in the office that same mutual love, save now it experienced it as something "foreign," something imposed as an obligation. What altered was not the office but the community's relation to the office, because the community's relation to itself had altered. It was not the fact of office within the Church which denigrated the priesthood of all believers and the equality and freedom of Christians. Rather it was the community's infidelity to its own spirit.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 191f.

> The history of the world knows of no period or individual state whose constitution preceded a moral level within the populace appropriate to it. How then can a fair historical judgment arrive at the conclusion that it was the arrogance and ambition of bishops which altered their relationship to their people? In truth, it was not the bishops who were exalted but the people at large who sank, because of which the episcopacy had to appear loftier and more powerful then than previously. But, with any higher law forgotten, once egoism in its various forms was made practically into the constructive principle within Church history, it must of course recognize itself as such.[1]

Möhler's impatience with those who make "egoism in its various forms" the "constructive principle" of their recounting of Church history is readily understood in light of this ecclesiology. Such historians completely misunderstand the true nature of the Church. Their distorted view of its history in turn distorts their ecclesiology.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 192f.

> Several Catholic authors believe it possible to maintain the divine institution of bishops in no way other than by entirely disparaging the role of the people, and Protestants think it possible to establish the dignity of the people only by negating the bishops, the points of unity. Both are extreme views; only the Catholic *Church* has the correct one.[1]

The correct ecclesiology is achieved only by mediation of the extremes. This is Möhler's constant concern throughout the second half of *Einheit in der Kirche*: to hold together both the Spirit-filled community which he had presented in the first four chapters and the structures of the visible historical Church.

The bishop's office should be built upon love. If that love within the community cools, the bishop, simply by remaining who he is, appears set over against the community and his office appears the embodiment of law. In a community bound by justice and mutual rights and obligations, to be the embodiment of law is to occupy the same relative position as the one who is personified love in a community cemented together by willing, self-sacrificing service. When justice proves too weak, as love has previously, then the community is ruled by brute force. Now the bishop must be quite simply the most powerful in the Church and enforce his will on its members. Once again his position relative to the community over which he resides has remained constant: he embodies the cohesive force of the community, in the one case love, then justice, then power.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 189, n. 1.

The Priesthood of the Ordained and the Priesthood of All Believers

Three points should be noted in Möhler's discussion of ecclesial office. First, throughout this first chapter of the second part of his book, "Unity in the Bishop," he frequently quotes Cyprian. In section 55, where he is concerned to demonstrate the coherence of his derivation of the episcopal office as the personified love of the local community with the reality of the functioning of that office as an authority with coercive power within that community, he refers to Cyprian twice within the text and in all the notes. This is in accord with the Cyprianic ecclesiological thought expressed. Union with the bishop is union with the community; either is "unthinkable" apart from the other.[2] The community's fidelity to its true nature is preserved by the episcopacy. The ordinary members of the Church may "sink," but he remains what he has always been in relation to it.[1] It is the office of the bishop which constantly reminds the Church and recreates in it what its true binding force must be.[2] Thus he is the one who is the true bearer of the Gemeingeist in the community's darker hours. This is the Cyprianic motif of the continuity of ecclesial office as the true guarantor of the Church's holiness.

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[1] Geiselmann traces the "love-law-power dialectic," as he terms it, to the influence of Drey and notes also similarities to the thought of Franz von Baader. Baader, in turn, credits his thought on the subject to Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), mystic and revolutionary who dabbled as well in philosophy of religion; see Geiselmann's commentary, in Möhler, Einheit, pp. 620ff. He does not, however, mention the most significant addition which Möhler himself makes: the historicizing of this "dialectic" within the Church. Baader and Saint-Martin were concerned to describe various forms of communities existing simultaneously. Drey, though applying the three motivating forces to the Church does not speak of them as successive and makes no application to the question of ecclesial office.

[2] Ibid., p. 190.

Second, there may appear a tendency toward that classicist strain in ecclesiology and Church history in the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, which exalted the primitive Christian community at the expense of all later developments.[3] The process of decline which Möhler depicts in section 55, however, is not the familiar story of the fatal seduction of the Church by the world following the conversion of Constantine. The reader is somewhat surprised to find that by the end of the second century the "earlier, holier times" were already in the past. The Church in which love has cooled and law has begun to dominate, in which the rule of power is clearly beginning, is the Church of the age of Cyprian. Thus the primitive Church in which the Gemeingeist is truly the spirit of communal love is the Church of the first century and the first decades of the second. Certainly Möhler does not mean that the Gemeingeist has been lost or weakened ever since. For him the decline from love to law to brute force is not the one long history of the Church. Rather it is a constantly repeated cycle. The Holy Spirit never allows the Christian community to languish at the stage in which it is ruled by personal power. Continually it is regenerated by those structures which personified the Gemeingeist from the beginning; it is revivified and restored to being the true communion of love. So, the bishop, for example, even at the darkest moments, "remains the vocal embodiment of the first love"; "he does not let this disposition be obliterated, but generates anew what had generated him"; "he speaks to all and encourages them."[1] It is precisely for this reason that he must sometimes stand over against the community.

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[1] Ibid., p. 193

[2] Ibid., p. 192.

[3] There is an extensive discussion of the background of this classicist view of Church history in Geiselmann's Introduction to his critical edition of Möhler's Einheit, pp. [18]-[33].

Third, at several points in this chapter on "Unity in the Bishop," Möhler indicates a priority for charism over office. The whole purpose of the second half of Einheit in der Kirche is to demonstrate, in accord with his organic principle, that all external forms in the Church are externalizations of internal realities. Thus there is a priority to the internal. The growth of the Church moves from within to without it; it is the Gemeingeist which generates its formal expressions, not the formal expressions which generate the Gemeingeist. Thus it is to be expected that in the individual the charistmatic gifts which indicate the depth of his immersion in the communal spirit call for his installation in ecclesial office, rather than that his appointment to the office produces those charisms.

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[1] Ibid., p. 192.

> Because the bishop should set forth the love of all in a living image, so too must all be active in his election. Everyone must give witness that he outstrips all others in love for Christ and in the power of proclaiming him. Everyone must perceive in him the one who unites them all, who, just as he sets forth the love of all, must also possess the love of all. He is not holier than others because he is a priest, rather he became a priest because he was holier.[1]

A similar note is sounded later when Möhler treats "of the nature of ecclesiastical ordination which is the necessary condition for any true Church service."

> As the apostles received from Christ the task of preaching the Gospel, which they could not have bestowed on themselves, so for all further ages no one can confer such a task upon himself. His commission must be given to him. This the whole Church confers upon him in the one who ordains, because it alone can worthily exercise the place of Christ. Furthermore, any portion in which the ordained, the commissioned one, works is a limb of a greater whole, a limb whose health is most intimately linked with its relationship to this whole. Thence flows to all the right of confirmation through which the ordained receives his license, and likewise their power to revoke his authorization if the one licensed shows himself unworthy. Ordination, according to its external appearance, is nothing other than the acknowledgment by the whole Church that its spirit is present in a particular believer which renders him apt to represent the love of a specific number of believers and unite them

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[1] Ibid., pp. 181f.

> with the whole Church. Thus it is not so much that the Holy Spirit is bestowed in ordination for the first time, as that it is acknowledged that he has bestowed himself previously upon the one being ordained in a special gift. He blows where he wills and men are transformed in accord with his will; he does not have to direct himself in accord with their will, although it is certain that he will give himself in fullest measure to the shepherd of his flock at the request of his community.[1]

This passage subsequently lost Möhler an appointment to the theological faculty in Bonn, when the archbishop of Cologne demanded a repudiation of Einheit in der Kirche, mentioning especially this passage which he understood as a rejection of the sacramental character of Orders incompatible with the Tridentine teaching on the Sacrament. Möhler refused to make any retraction, stating that, although he no longer would maintain everything he had written in his first book in the precise way he had written it, he could not abandon a child of his own thought, especially one which had been so dear to him.[2] The question remains, however, whether Möhler did intend to dissolve the sacrament of Holy Orders into a communal discernment of the charismatic gifts bestowed by the Spirit upon a member of the community.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 222f.

[2] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:179f. Although unwilling to say so publicly, Möhler suspected, probably rightly, that Ferdinand von Spiegel, the archbishop of Cologne, was acting on behalf of his protegé, Hermes, whose rationalism represented a strain of Catholic theology in Germany opposed to the Tübingen school. It should be noted, however, that Spiegel was not alone in his adverse reaction to Einheit in der Kirche, e.g., its introduction into Vienna was prohibited; see Sebastian Merkle, "Möhler," Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft 59 (1938): 66f.

Two factors must be observed. First, Möhlers refers in the first passage mentioned to the election of a bishop, not to his ordination to the episcopacy. His statement that one "is not holier than others because he is a priest, rather he became a priest because he was holier" is not intended to describe the effects of ordination but the qualifications of the ordinand. "Outstripping all others in love for Christ and in the power of proclaiming him," "uniting all," "possessing the love of all," are the marks which the Christian community seeks, and sought in the ancient Church, in candidates for the episcopate. This does not, however, render ordination superfluous.

Even in the second passage quoted, which the archbishop of Cologne found so objectionable, with its explicit statement that ordination is "nothing other than the acknowledgment by the whole Church that its spirit is present in a particular believer," it must also be observed that Möhler is careful to add that this is ordination viewed "according to its external appearance." He is not concerned at this point with the inner reality of the sacrament of Holy Orders. It is the way in which that sacrament was celebrated in the ante-Nicene Church, and should be celebrated in his time, which is the object of Möhler's attention. Incorporation into apostolic succession, sacramental character, sacramental grace, etc., are not Möhler's concern, but that fact should not be taken to mean that he repudiates them.

The second factor which must be admitted, however, is that the interpretation given these statements by the archbishop of Cologne and others is not an unreasonable one in light of the ecclesiological framework of _Einheit in der Kirche_. As has been noted, the inner life of the Church does take precedence over the external forms. This remains true even as Möhler demonstrates their necessary intrinsic connection with that creative dynamism which is the Church's _Gemeingeist_. Thus it is not surprising that readers might understand Möhler's statements regarding the charismatic qualities of the ordinand's life to be the principal element in his assumption of office, and the office itself as the simple externalization of that inner Spirit-worked consecration. This is, of course, furthered by the reluctance of the author to trace ecclesial offices to the historical incarnate Son. As we have seen, Möhler declines to give the concrete activity of the historical Jesus any more direct connection with Church office than that he foreshadowed it in his commissioning of the apostles.

Some further clarification is provided by the thirteenth appendix. There Möhler rejects any reading of Ignatius of Antioch or of Tertullian which would understand them as claiming that in the apostolic and sub-apostolic age each man acted as "his own priest" even in the celebration of the Eucharist.

> Now if anyone concludes from Tertullian that each believer could celebrate the Eucharist for himself, for without concluding this the argument [regarding the need for union of Christians with their bishop] has no content, then he demonstrates only that he has still not understood the Eucharist. If it should always be celebrated as the actualization of the union of Christians with Christ and of Christians among themselves, how can one celebrate the Eucharist for himself, separated from the others, and so, to this extent, be his own priest? If he does not intend to isolate himself, how can he celebrate it alone and apart from that celebration in which the whole community perceives itself united? In which the members of the community express themselves as one union not only among themselves but with the whole body of the Church? And, again, what can he look to have accomplished through his celebration, who, while he wants to be united with Christ, separates himself from his community, when in fact Christ and his community are one? With good cause did the ancient Church decide clearly that such a one does not receive the Body of the Lord, but common bread, and his consecration is not the Lord's consecration. In this sense, no one can be his own priest.[1]

Here Möhler makes it apparent that his emphasis on the universal priesthood of believers is not intended to isolate one Christian from another. Understood in such fashion, no one can indeed be "his own priest." But beyond that, one detects his way of resolving the understandable misreading of his statements about ordination. All offices in the Church are intended to express and to serve the unity of the Christian people with one another, and, by that union, with Christ. To maintain and express that union in liturgical service and sacramental celebration, the Church must delegate and empower certain members to celebrate what must be communal, not individual, events. It is that which is accomplished in Holy Orders viewed "from within."

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 313.

> For with regard to what the widespread objection to the ancient Church advances, that priests soon viewed themselves as being mediators between God and believers and consequently were distracted from the mediatorial role of our unique mediator, it is obvious in consequence of all we have said that this attack proceeds from an egoistic understanding of the faithful. If the Fathers of the Church made use of similar expressions they mean nothing more than that the community of the Church mediates Christ to us, or better that he is inseparably bound up with it and conjoined to it. He gives himself to us only through those who are his own to show us clearly that they belong together and are one in him. Thus he leads us to the community of the Church and, in it, to himself and to the Father. So it is he who works all in all. He is the unique and true mediator. Only through him do we have confidence in the Father, and he unites us with him. But for this latter purpose he makes use of his faithful, and through him all true believers have consequently a share in his office. The priest, however, is used by synecdoche for all believers, because he expresses their unity.[1]

Thus, in a striking use of a rhetorical figure, ordination is the process by which an individual can be used "by synecdoche" for the whole Church.

The Petrine Office

The office of the metropolitan is presented by Möhler as an intermediate step between the individual bishop and the whole episcopate which expresses the unity of the entire Church. It is, perhaps, notable that he felt it necessary in 1825 to devote a full, albeit brief, chapter to this office. For the Febronianist ecclesiology of the previous century had made great use of the archbishops as provincials as a way of avoiding simple episcopalism in its view of the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 314f.

Church.[1] It may, therefore, represent a remnant of that now defunct ecclesiastical system to which the young Tübingen professor in his first book felt bound to pay a nod.

His position on the papal office is, however, of interest, especially in view of his later statement of papal primacy in the various editions of Symbolik. He begins his discussion with a remarkable admission.

> Whether the primacy of one church belonged to the intrinsic character of the Catholic Church was doubtful to me for a very long while. In fact I had determined to deny it. For the organic binding of all parts into one whole, which the idea of the Catholic Church absolutely demands and which, in itself, it is, seemed fully attained through the unity of the episcopate as it has up to this point been developed. On the other hand it is apparent that the history of the first three centuries is very limited with regard to the evidence which would make all doubt clearly impossible. Only a freer, deeper study of the biblical Peter and of history, a living immersion in the organism of the Church, produced necessarily in me its idea.[2]

Although it is certainly true that his occasional pieces in the Theologische Quartalschrift from 1823 on leave no question about Möhler's episcopalist predilections in regard to Church order, the statement that he found "for a very long while" the issue of the existence of the primacy doubtful is something unexpected.[3] But it should be noted that Möhler says that he was doubtful not about its actual existence, but about its necessary existence. In other words, he did not question the fact that one particular church, that of Rome, laid claim to primacy within the Church or that that claim was and should be honored. His problem was to determine whether that claim was a necessary constituent of the Church, whether, in accord with his notion of Wissenschaft, it could be derived necessarily from the idea of the Church as well as be found by historical investigation. In 1823, while in Berlin, Möhler had considered writing a study of the period of the great western schism and the councils of Constance and Basel-Florence.[1] In his review of Walter's canon law text later that same year, he indicated what elements in that period he found interesting.[2] As might be anticipated they are ecclesiological concerns: the conciliarist theories of Gerson, d'Ailly, et al. In pursuing this line of thought Möhler had to ask whether the papal office was necessary to the very idea of the Church. The abandonment of that project, however, and the development of an organic ecclesiology out of the ante-Nicene Fathers provided him with the basis for asserting the real and ideal existence of the primacy through historical investigation and ideal construction, "living immersion in the organism of the Church."

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[1] See J. Küntziger, Febronius et le fébronianisme (Brussels, 1891); F. Vigener, Gallikanismus und episkopalistische Strömungen im deutschen Katholizismus zwischen Tridentinum und Vatikanum (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1913).

[2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 227.

[3] Geiselmann professes himself astonished at the statement in his commentary on Einheit; ibid, p. 626.

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[1] Lösch, Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:516.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 236-299.

> That through what had been said up to now the developments of unity in the Church could not be perfected was obvious at the first glance. In a consistent progression it lacked one element, the capstone of the whole. If in a perfected organism, as in the universe, the individual parts are likewise organic, so that in the individual member the type of the whole is perceived and, contrariwise, the dynamism constructing the whole repeats its own blueprint in the individuals, then in the ecclesial organism, if we are to view the constructions of the whole advanced up to now as closed, we find the progression suddenly broken off and the constructive dynamic diminished so that it does not succeed in perfecting the full work according to its established types. In the diocese we found the bishop in whom the rays of love are concentrated, and in the wider union the metropolitan as the mid-point, as the head of many bishops who belong together. Further we have now founded the unity of all bishops--but still there is no expression of their unity in one living image.[1]

The principle of the organism which mediates inner dynamism and outward expression allows Möhler to resolve his doubt about the intrinsic quality of the papal office. His understanding of wissenschaftlich method drawn from Schelling through Drey demands that there be a coincidence of history and idea, of the results of investigation and the product of ideal construction. It was the latter, the ideal necessity, which he could not account for, until the working out of Einheit in der Kirche. Now he can see that the "consistent progression" would be "suddenly broken off," "the constructive dynamic diminished" without some expression of primacy. The intrinsic necessity has been supplied and his doubt disappears.

What, however, of the historical data? Historical investigation, or least into the ante-Nicene Church, yields no conclusive evidence, nothing at any rate "which would make all doubt clearly impossible." Möhler explains this:

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 227f.

> During the dispersion of the apostles Peter could neither exercise the activities of the primacy nor will anyone deem that it was necessary, even granting that he was empowered to do so. In the period when Christianity first made itself strong in individual communities and in which the unity of all the individual Churches was conceived in its earliest organization, the primacy of one church and its bishop could certainly not be advanced. For if we want to lay hold of the primacy in its idea, we must explain it, as has been said, as the personified reflection of the unity of the whole Church. But it was impossible that the unity of the whole Church should objectify itself through self-intuition and set forth as its own product a personified image before it had fully penetrated itself. Thus those who insist upon incontrovertible historical proof for a primacy before that period which we designated earlier as that in which the unity of the Church appeared with perfect consciousness (the age of Cyprian), must be dismissed as making excessive demands, because it is not possible according to the law of a genuine evolution. Just as, on the other hand, the efforts of those who wish to find it completely settled before that period, or the claim to have so found it, must appear as fruitless and untenable. The primacy like any intrinsic characteristic of Christianity is not to be viewed as a dead concept but rather as a living reality and as taking its origin from a living reality.[1]

Möhler repeats the line of argument which he had employed in demonstrating that the Church was not founded by the historical Jesus but by the indwelling Spirit instead: no institution is imposed from without until human beings experience the need for such an institution within themselves. "What would the dead statement mean, 'You must have a focus of unity,' even if spoken by Christ, if no exigency present in the innermost recesses of believers corresponded to it?"[1] Christ did not announce himself as the Son of God; he waited until that proclamation welled up from within his apostles and then he confirmed it. So the dearth of evidence for the primacy in the ancient Church is not surprising; it is precisely what should be expected. Anything else would violate "the law of a genuine evolution," by which Möhler means it would contradict the analogy of the organism.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 230f.

Thus the understanding of the Church as living organism provides both elements of a wissenschaftlich treatment of the primacy. On the level of ideal construction it explains the intrinsic necessity of the primacy for the Church. On the level of historical investigation it interprets the inconclusive data of the first three centuries.

The Evolution of Church Polity

A crucial question has been kept in reserve until the summary concluding section of Einheit in der Kirche. If forms and offices developed in the Church's life as expressions of the internal dynamic power of communal love binding the Church's members ever more closely together, if the closer that union became the more concrete and specific the expression became, even to the point of personifying itself in one individual, bishop, metropolitan, pope, depending on the level of the community, and if in turn the ever more concrete expression further solidified the Church's unity and so its spirit of love, then is it not possible that the "law of a true evolution" requires further development? Must we not conclude that the very constitution of the Church remains open to further and, perhaps, radical change? If the concrete forms and offices were historically rooted in the institution of the Church by an historical founder--in other words, if they were part of an institution by Christ--then one would have to speak of the clarification and adaptation of those forms and office, but one which must remain faithful to their foundation. But when those forms and offices are not given to the Church by a founder, but instead develop from within, then it is only to that inner Gemeingeist to which they must remain faithful, and far greater and more sweeping changes are possible.

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[1] Ibid., p. 231.

> We find a great abundance and a great flexibility of these forms of unity. In fact, according to need, one more than the others is always emphasized. So the more prosperous the circumstances of the Church, the more will the earliest bond of the Church, that through the episcopacy, be set forward and the others, the metropolitans and the primacy, will retire into the background. In less happy times the metropolitan bond advances into greater prominence, which can still be useful as a mid-step in proportion to the need. As we see in subsequent periods primates, exarchs, and patriarchs are formed, so in the most difficult and disorganized condition for the Church, the primacy appears most distinctly, the whole power of the Church, at other times distributed, will concentrate itself in one, in order to be able to work the more energetically against all its multiplying antagonists.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 239.

Thus different external forms become useful at different times and become less prominent, perhaps even fall into desuetude, at others. The effort must be made to breathe new life into these forms. "All must work so that the forms be filled with that life out of which they emerged in order that we consciously maintain the original unity of the Christian life, love, which previously had been unconscious."[1] This must be accompanied by a concerted attempt to raise to thematic awareness those doctrinal elements which have been incorporated into the Church's life and practice but which are no longer the explicit objects of reflection. The forms, both in terms of office and doctrine, are part of the life of the organism, an ongoing life in which no element of the past is ever completely dead. The forms evolved in the first centuries of Christianity remain a more or less vital part of the life of the Church presently, but so too do the various alterations which took place in those forms during subsequent centuries. "The unqualified assertion, 'Earlier there were no such forms as there are now, we want the old forms again,' is unclear in itself. Is it that this proposition intends only one step back or does it want a return wholly to the earliest antiquity of the Church? If we have the old life-force again, then we will necessarily return again to the old forms." No one can simply dismiss any stage of the Church's life as unimportant and irrelevant to that ecclesial life today. Every moment of the organism's life is a necessary moment, for, if the organism still lives, then every past moment represents a successful adaptation to the circumstances of that moment. The inner life-force of the organism alters old forms and generates new ones in order to express itself in changed conditions. Thus it was the mistake of reform movements in the Church from the twelfth century on to attack Church structure as if that were the source of the Church's woes. "But that structure was the result of the problem, not the cause." The structure was the response evolved by the living ecclesial organism to allow it to live in difficult times. The various reform movements culminating in the Reformation all made the mistake of taking too external a view of ecclesial life and so trying to preserve that life by altering forms, when what was needed was a deepened experience of that life coupled with a resolve to alter the circumstances of the world in which the Church found itself. This misunderstanding of ecclesiology and of organic history merely succeeded in giving the Church older forms less suitable to safeguarding its survival in a changed world and so finally in weakening the organism.

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[1] Ibid., p. 240.

> This inversion of the causal connection is the deepest reason for the wrong-headed and rash reformation in that time and, in our own time, of the disastrous misunderstanding of history, the lack of appreciation for great men and the distressing disparagement of the Church and its spirit. Under the protection of the hierarchy which had been formed and within it, Christian life grew and prospered and brought forth all knowledge and whatever

> in that age was noble and worthy of respect, and of that there was a very great deal.[1]

So Möhler indicates that his study of the ante-Nicene Church could just as well have been an investigation of the medieval Church or, indeed, the Church of any age. For at any moment of its life, truly wissenschaftlich study would lead one to construct that ideal view of the Church's nature which reveals the Gemeingeist of the Christian communion on the one hand, and, on the other, would insist that the investigator proceed with the historical sensitivity which reveals the subtle adjustments in the external forms of that Gemeingeist to the circumstances of the age.

The Reformers, however, were not the only ones who misunderstood the delicate relationshup between the ecclesial organism and the historical situation. Many Catholics erred in the opposite direction. Whereas the various reform movements sought to free the inner life-force of the Church by stripping away the external forms which that force had evolved, and so ended by weakening the internal dynamic of the Church's life, many others in reacting to these attempts fought so hard to preserve those forms and structures at all costs that they refused to recognize the ongoing evolution of the organism and have finished by imprisoning the Gemeingeist in outmoded and constrictive expressions. They fail totally to recognize that "abundance and flexibility" of the Church's formal structure which Möhler, from his organic perspective, praises as the clearest sign of the vitality of the Christian community. Thus, when the times demanded it, "extraordinary men were raised up, as Gregory VII, Alexander III, Innocent III, et al." But the times do not always demand such men or the kind of exercise of primacy which they employed. "Ordinary men received the papal dignity: a sign that this no longer need be the old form in all its greatness."[1] The papacy (and the episcopacy as well) will always exist in the Church. No moment of its history within the Church can ever be regarded as mistaken or superfluous. But it need not and must not always exist in exactly the same form. Its power and its importance change with the circumstances of the organic life which it serves and expresses.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 240f.

It is consequently as wrong for Catholics to try to maintain the precise exercise and relative importance of any ecclesial form from one age to another as it is for Protestants to attempt to return to some earlier and less structured moment of the life of the Church. Both undertakings spring from an inadequate ecclesiology.

> The generative principle, the inner character of the Church's structure is unclear to both parties, but, for the most part, to those who are separated far more than to the rigid medievalists who in any event have in

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[1] Ibid., pp. 241f.

> Germany almost no adherents, in the sense that the one-time structure is necessary for all ages.[1]

Möhler certainly was not an adherent in that sense and obviously regarded himself, at least on this point, as being in the main stream of German Catholicism. Indeed, his book was written precisely to speak to a German Catholicism which had seen the structures of its life swept away and which sought both new forms and an ecclesiology to explain them. It is certain that the approach to the papacy and its role in the Church's life adopted in Einheit in der Kirche was not that later canonized by Vatican I. The Febronian centrum unitatis understanding of the Roman primacy, although given a vastly different underpinning in the total ecclesiological framework, clearly still colors the young professor's thinking. But it is also clear, even in these final words of the text, that there is a far more important influence at work on Möhler as we have seen in the first part of his book. He himself gave the emphasis to the words "for the most part" in his statement that Protestant ecclesiology was even more unsatisfactory than that of the "rigid medievalists." Obviously there were significant exceptions for him, and the most significant was Schleiermacher.

The excitement which one senses throughout his first book, the brilliance, the almost poetic diction, the patristic learning, the dialectic ability, all have been put to use by Möhler for two ends. The first was the resolution of the tension between Sailer's Erlebnistheologie and the existence of an ecclesial community, and the second was the relationship between the Christian Gemeingeist and the historical Church with its concrete structure. The "deeper" grounding which Möhler gave all of this is a panentheism which, while generally "in the air," found particularly persuasive expression in Schleiermacher. That Möhler identified panentheism with Schleiermacher especially is apparent in a work published two years after Einheit in der Kirche. There, as will be seen in the following chapter, when the Tübingen scholar criticizes the panentheist position and begins his attempt to move beyond it, Schleiermacher is taken as the spokesman for the rejected viewpoint. In his growing uneasiness with the panentheism of his contemporary in Berlin, Möhler would be forced to rethink the ecclesiology of his first book, built upon what came to seem an unstable foundation. In 1825, however, that foundation appeared sure to the young author. It is, perhaps, not accidental that the last lines of the final appendix to the text, and so, in a sense, the very last lines of Einheit in der Kirche, return to that panentheist vision which makes coherent the whole book.

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[1] Ibid., p. 242.

> Here once more is found a type of the universe: every individual depends upon this inner, animated, unified and mutually mediated existence and life. But for that reason it is God who sustains all in all and in whom all exists. No creature dares boast that it is mediator, but rather that it is mediated. As here there is a communion of nature, so there [in the Church] of the holy one and the

> saints. And so I admit willingly that many Fathers occasionally expressed themselves in an unfortunate manner in this regard. But we must comprehend everything in its connectedness.[1]

If any significant change occurs in Möhler's ecclesiology after 1825, it is a function of a change in his comprehension of "connectedness."

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[1] Ibid., p. 315.

CHAPTER III

SECOND THOUGHTS: ATHANASIUS AND "ANSELM," 1827-28

There is no drama so engrossing as that of one mind appropriating another and clarifying itself in the process. It is that inherently dramatic process to which Möhler now turned himself, following the breakthrough of Einheit in der Kirche, a resolution of tension within his own thought and the theology of the Church in Germany in his time. Friedrich Schleiermacher had been the support of the ecclesiology of Einheit in der Kirche. Möhler was too immersed in the intellectual world of his time for other influences, both Catholic and Protestant, not to be apparent in his first book, but it is the great Berlin theologian who pervades the work. The fact that the young Catholic author experienced so strong a sense of personal discovery in the understanding of the Church which Einheit in der Kirche proposes, indicates that he did not simply appropriate Schleiermacher's thought. He could and did describe his book as being "the image of my innermost, truest being, the accurate statement of my views on Christianity, Christ, and the Church."[1] The reader of *Einheit in der Kirche* can not fail to be impressed with the personal tone of the writing throughout, to the extent that Geiselmann can compare it to Augustine's *Confessions*.[2] Möhler comes, through Schleiermacher, to his own deeply personal grasp of what he understands to be "the principle of Catholicism." Thus, the lack of specific reference to Schleiermacher in *Einheit in der Kirche* is due not to any lack of scholarly generosity or refusal to give credit in footnotes where credit is due, nor to any real or imagined need for caution in acknowledging extra-confessional indebtedness. Möhler was not simply following Schleiermacher; he was discovering what Schleiermacher had discovered. Further, he was discovering it within his own tradition. It was not simply theological one-upmanship when he wrote in 1827 that contemporary *Bewusstseinstheologie* was nothing other than Fénelon's uncovery of the *intimus conscientiae fundus*:

> Hence it is only the usual ignorance of Protestant writers with regard to Catholic literature when they have charged against modern Catholic authors that distinctions of the sort they employ have grown up on Protestant soil. These people, who have never moved outside Protestant limits, certainly do not know what lies beyond those bounds, and so speak of a Schleiermacherizing by Catholic theologians, instead of saying, as they should, that Schleiermacher catholicizes. He

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[1] Lösch, *Johann Adam Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe*, 1:24.

[2] Geiselmann's Introduction in Möhler, *Einheit*, p. [16].

> himself has wondered in his Reden über Religion that this charge has not been laid against him.[1]

This is not simply an attempt to claim for one party the best insights of another. This is a sincere statement that Schleiermacher had touched a facet of Christianity basic to both Catholicism and Protestantism. Möhler discovered his own tradition in his great Protestant contemporary.

Following Einheit in der Kirche, Möhler undertook a project of intellectual history. In a way, Einheit in der Kirche had been such a project: it was, after all, a patristic study. But in Einheit in der Kirche, the *a priori* moment had overwhlemed the investigative. Möhler did not systematically examine the ante-Nicene sources and so arrive at a theology of the Church; he set forth an ecclesiology and illustrated it from the Fathers. In his next book, however, Athanasius der Grosse und die Kirche seiner Zeit, besonders im Kampfe mit dem Arianismus,[2] he proceeds from a careful investigation of the evidence, most especially the writings of Athanasius himself. Scarcely does this eliminate the *a priori* moment, save that now this is not so much a particular point of view as a definite question.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 514f.

[2] Johann Adam Möhler, Athanasius der Grosse und die Kirche seiner Zeit, besonders im Kampfe mit dem Arianismus (Mainz, 1827). Page references are here given to the second unchanged edition (Mainz, 1844).

Intellectual history is always the attempt to recreate in one's mind another's process of thought. It requires one to ask the questions which the other asked, and experience them as real questions. Möhler does this with Athanasius, but not with Athanasius alone. He is also engaged in formulating the trinitarian dispute of the fourth century as a real question, that is, as a question which touches himself. The study of the classic trinitarian controversy became a means of self-criticism. It is indicative of Schleiermacher's importance to Möhler that the latter's self-clarification was carried on through criticism of the former. That Möhler's concern, his question brought to the historical study, revolves about his contemporary situation is clear from a brief sketch of a proposed introduction to Athanasius, which remained unpublished in Möhler's lifetime.[1] There are two trends in modern Christianity, he writes, both of which are destructive of the true nature of the gospel. The one is a mystical view which is satisfied to equate Christianity with a generalized piety, and thinks it unnecessary, if not harmful, to try to arrive at a definite interconnection between individual doctrines and the whole of Christian faith. This tendency too much fears the reduction of faith to a collection of dead concepts. The second tendency, opposed to the first in principle but terminating in the same effect, makes of Christianity a system of morality which renders the doctrines of faith superfluous. Indeed, this current of thought rejoices that it can maintain the high moral standards of Christian faith without the clap-trap of doctrine.

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[1] The manuscript in the Georgianum in Munich was finally published by Emil Verneisel, Theologische Quartalschrift 119 (1938): 114-117, together with a brief note in Möhler's hand on the salvation of the unbaptized, found in the manuscript of Einheit in der Kirche.

> Consequently we have undertaken the study of Saint Athanasius who in a marvelous way united the most heartfelt piety and the keenest knowledge. We do so in the joyful hope that God, who blessed bishop Athanasius with such great gifts of spirit and so much effectiveness, will let him work as effectively now. Or better, that he who was active in Athanasius then, will show himself still active in him now.[1]

In the course of writing, Möhler greatly sharpened and expanded his description of those two contemporary trends, but it is clear, that, from its inception, Athanasius was intentionally as much about the nineteenth century as it was about the fourth.

The clarification to which Möhler subjects his own thinking by means of his critique of Schleiermacher does not directly concern ecclesiology, and so might appear to be beside the point of this study. It has, as its focus, the presuppositions necessary to maintain the reality of the relationship between God and world, and so, more precisely between God and man. But, as section 31 of Einheit in der Kirche made clear, the first thoroughly elaborated ecclesiology of the young Möhler rests squarely on a particular formulation of that relationship, namely, panentheism. As Möhler's conceptualization of the God-world relationship sharpens, as his grasp of the consequences of the understanding of that relationship for the understanding of its two poles deepens, his theology of the Church must accordingly change.

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[1] Ibid., p. 117.

The Sabellian Schleiermacher

The crucial critique of Schleiermacher appears at the end of the third book of Athanasius.[1] In order to understand Möhler's opposition and to penetrate to the concerns which undergird it, it is necessary to examine Schleiermacher's handling of the Trinity. In Athanasius, Möhler refers to an article "by one of the most gifted theologians among Protestants" which had appeared "a few years ago."[2] A note clarifies this to be Schleiermacher's essay entitled "Über den Gegensatz zwischen der Sabellianischen und der Athanasianischen Vorstellung von der Trinität," published in 1822.[3]

In that article, Schleiermacher had traced the development of modalistic monarchianism from Praxeas and

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, pp. 273-299.

[2] Ibid., p. 273.

[3] Theologische Zeitschrift 3 (1822): 295-408.

Noetus through Beryllus to Sabellius, attempting to reconstruct at every stage the doctrine of each man regarding the relationship between Christ and his Father. Finally he summarizes:

> If the quarrel is viewed from this central point toward which all sides tend, it seems to consist entirely in this: Sabellius maintains the Trinity exists only with reference to the different manners and spheres of activity of the divinity, in that, as governing the universe in its all-embraching activity directed toward all finite being, it is Father, as redemptive in its special activity in and through the person of Christ, it is Son, as sanctifying in its similarly special activity in the totality of the faithful and as its unity, it is Spirit. Contrary to this, the doctrine which has now become ecclesiastical maintains that the Trinity exists purely within the divinity, a question of uncreated distinctions completely apart from these various activities, and that the Godhead would have been Father, Son and Spirit in itself eternally, even if it had never created, never united itself with one particular human being, and never dwelt in the community of believers.[1]

After this concise summary of the two positions, Schleiermacher notes, "If this is the whole difference, one may well ask what is to be said about the charge of impiety which has been made against the doctrine of Sabellius?" One can scarcely claim that the Father is done any injury because he is not made the source of the Son and Spirit. To claim that he is so, Schleiermacher argues in Sabellius's stead, is to risk demeaning the second and third persons, because it affirms that their participation in the Godhead, is not immediate, but through the Father. Indeed this seems to deny the very notion of the Trinity. Certainly Sabellius is guilty of no impiety toward the Son, when he intends to acknowledge that the Son is no less God than the Father and with regard to the incarnate Son, that God's presence in him is in a manner unqiue and unrepeatable. The true Sabellian perceives in the gift of the Spirit the perfect image of the most sublime mystery, and so cannot be accused of demeaning the third person. The implication is clear that, in fact, the Sabellian theology of the Trinity protects and affirms the divine presence in the creation, redemption and sanctification of the universe far more adequately than the Athanasian.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 396.

Schleiermacher presses the Sabellian case further. Basil had charged that no one holding the monarchian doctrine of God could pray the doxology. But obviously a large number of people did both pray in the trinitarian formula and accept Sabellianism. Indeed in doing so "the whole of Christian piety, resting on the *monarchia* and the *oikonomia*, was brought together."[2] For the Sabellian, in pronouncing the doxology, honored both the supreme transcendence of the Monad and the activity of the Godhead as creating, redeeming and sanctifying. This is more than can be said of the orthodox party in their prayer. For Sabellius could well have countered by asking how one holding to the immanent Trinity could adore both the "begotten" divinity of the Son and the "spirated" divinity of the Spirit while holding both distinct--especially when neither the generation of the Son nor the procession of the Spirit are to be imagined in human terms. "Thus, Sabellius could either elude or return this charge, depending on how it was made, and no one will be able to claim that Christian piety has suffered any injury from his doctrine."[1]

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[1] Möhler perceived immediately that Schleiermacher was arguing not for the Sabellian theology as a viable alternative, but as a preferable substitute to the Athanasian doctrine: "the latter [i.e., the Sabellian doctrine] is decisively given preference over the Catholic doctrine." Möhler, *Athanasius*, p. 273.

[2] *Theologische Zeitschrift* 3 (1822): 399.

As regards the claim that the Sabellian doctrine "judaizes," i.e., that it is similar to the theological stances of Artemon and Paul of Samosata in refusing to acknowledge the reality of the presence of the divine in Christ, Sabellius is on far surer ground than his opponents. "Sabellius not only recognizes the Godhead in Christ, he does this in such a way that by comparison with him the Athanasian [doctrine] judaizes."[2] The proponent of the Athanasian trinitarian theology holds that the presence of the Son is to be discovered already in the old covenant. But if this is so, the radical "newness" of the new covenant is compromised and the difference between Judaism and Christianity is significantly diminished. That problem can in no way arise on the basis of the Sabellian Trinity, for here the Son is not present until the incarnation, when the new dispensation commences as a decisive change from the divine-human relationship which had preceded. Sabellianism more adequately protects the center of Christian piety, the presence of God in Christ, than the doctrine which has become the official ecclesiastical theology. Schleiermacher's preference is pronounced.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 400.

To understand that preference, the treatment of Sabellianism must be read against the background of Schleiermacher's discussion of the Trinity in the Glaubenslehre, where the doctrine of the Trinity was reserved for an appendix and allotted a mere five propositions out of one hundred and ninety in the first edition.[1] The placement of the doctrine within the whole of Christian dogmatics is of great importance. Schleiermacher calls the doctrine of the Trinity "the true capstone of the Christian doctrinal system."[2] The phrase is ambiguous in itself. It can indicate that this doctrine is the central and necessary link which unites and supports the entire dogmatic structure, giving strength and coherence. Or it may mean that it is a doctrine which draws its import from the rest of the system, an element which is ornamental, rounding off the great dogmatic arch without adding anything essential to it. In context it is clearly the latter which Schleiermacher intends. "Everything essential in the now completed second part of our presentation is also the essential content of the doctrine of the Trinity."[1] The Trinity is a resume of the central doctrinal positions of Christianity, but it adds nothing to them. That is made clear in the subsequent proposition: "The ecclesiastical dogma, however, that in the one and undivided divine nature there exists three persons of like nature and like power has not, thus formulated, equal value with other proper doctrines of faith, but is only a summary statement."[2] Proper doctrines of faith are defined as "immediate expressions of a definite modification of our pious self-consciousness." The examples cited of such doctrines are the union of the divine being with human nature in Christ and in the Church. This makes clear the reason for the placement of the treatment of the Trinity at the very end of the Glaubenslehre. It is not doctrine in the same sense as the propositions treated earlier in the doctrinal system. It has no content of its own. It merely reformulates earlier doctrine. It restates that that which Christian self-consciousness affirms as united with humanity in the person of Christ and in the community of believers is God, and that that presence is as really God in the one as in the other. Therefore, as a doctrine which is not an immediate expression of Christian self-consciousness, as a doctrine which is mediate in the sense of derived from other immediate expressions, it can only be placed after those doctrines from which it is derived. Thus, since the Trinity, as a dogma so widely and for so long considered central to Christianity, must be included in the Glaubenslehre, its positioning at the very end is completely consistent with Schleiermacher's understanding of dogmatics as the explication in doctrinal formulae of Christian self-consciousness and the clarification of the connections between those formulae.[1] Not only is that relegation of the Trinity to the final pages logical, however, it is also precautionary. For the Trinity as a mediated or derived doctrine is a product of speculation, not of self-consciousness. To attempt to conclude from it to any other doctrine would be only to wander further afield into speculation, which, although it may have a legitimate function, is not dogmatics. Indeed, it is precisely from such a speculative bias that Schleiermacher wishes to preserve dogmatics and theology generally.

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[1] In the second edition the total number of propositions was reduced to 172 of which three are devoted to the Trinity.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 2:686.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., 2:688.

Two important examples are adduced. The doctrine of the Trinity guarantees that the being of God was in Christ. This is the entirety of what is affirmed regarding the second person within the Godhead. When one affirms that the theophanies of the Old Testament are to be referred to that second person, one is engaged in speculation, not in dogmatics. Such an affirmation is not the translation of Christian self-consciousness. It is a conclusion at which one has arrived by means of a process of reasoning which takes as its starting point the doctrine of the Trinity understood as possessing a content of its own. The trinitarian doctrine is employed not as a summary statement of what is properly Christian dogmatics, but as a fact which can be predicated directly of God, which supplies new data, and from which one can conclude to further doctrines. One is free, consequently, to maintain that the manifestations of the divine under the old covenant were revelations of the second trinitarian person, but one is not free to claim such a statement as doctrine. No product of speculation may contradict what is properly doctrinal, and so, if someone were to propose this relationship between the Son and Old Testament theophanies, he must do so without prejudicing "the connection of Christianity to Judaism and the value of messianic prophecy."[1] This is, of course, precisely the point at issue in Schleiermacher's comparison of the Sabellian and Athanasian doctrines of the Trinity when he suggests that the latter may be open to the charge of "Judaizing." A similar illustration is advanced regarding the Holy Spirit. The Trinity correctly understood functions as a reaffirmation that the divine is as present in the community of believers as it was in Christ. The doctrine is misued if it is understood as the basis for an argument leading to the notion of the Spirit's involvement in the creation of the universe. The Trinity is regarded then as containing fresh data for further speculation. If some sort of cosmic activity of the Spirit is averred, it must be done with the recognition that the proposition has no intrinsic relation to Christian dogmatics and in such a way that the Holy Spirit is recognized as uniquely present in the Church.

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[1] Ibid., 1:124f.

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[1] Ibid., 2:687.

The Trinity is nothing more or less than a way of affirming the reality of the relationship between God and the world in Christ and the Church. It is not and cannot be a statement of truth regarding the divine in itself apart from any divinely established relation between God and the world. For Schleiermacher the immanent Trinity cannot be affirmed and forms no part of Christian doctrine. The economic Trinity is all.

> If it is to be maintained that it is no hyperbolical expression of our consciousness of Christ and the Gemeingeist of the Christian Church when we say that God is, was, and always will be in both, then a desire very naturally arises to differentiate this being of God in a definite way from the being of God in and for himself and from his being in relation to the world in general. But we have no basis whatsoever to presume that this could ever be done in so absolute a way that a formula could be erected as a universal rule for all time and that all deviations from it could be denounced as unchristian. For we possess no such formula, either for the being of God in relation to the world or for the

> difference between that and the being of God in and for himself.[1]

The attempt to produce such a formula requires distinctions, which could only be drawn from speculation--and that, of course, is ruled out by the very discipline of dogmatics.

The attempt to think the doctrine of the Trinity as a statement of a relationship immanent to the Godhead necessarily falls into contradictions.

> This Trinity can be thought by us as an eternal fact in the divine nature in no way other than this, that either the Unity or the Trinity appears less important to us, the one than the other, thus always being inadequate to the matter and contrary to the hypothesis.[2]

One must maintain that the Son, as the presence of the divine in Christ, is God equal in nature and power to the Father, or else the community of man with God is not established in and through Christ. Likewise, the Spirit, as the presence of the divine in the Church, must be equal in nature and power to the Father and the Son, or else the community of believers with one another is not union with Christ. Each person is the divine nature and yet each is to be distinguished from the other. Whatever is the basis for that differentiation must lie in each inner-trinitarian person, not in the divine nature itself. Each _is_ the divine nature completely, they do not _have_ the divinity or _share_ it, as if the divine nature were something outside them, a fourth person or an impersonal quality. Nor is it the case that the divinity manifests itself differently in each person of the Trinity, as the peculiarity or characteristic of each. But how can this be thought? For if it cannot be thought, then it is of no use to Christian self-consciousness; it is not religious. Schleiermacher suggests an analogy.

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[1] Ibid., 2:691f.

[2] Ibid., 2:695.

> In fact, in order to grasp this, beyond question the most natural and obvious image is that of the species and the individuals grouped under it. The Godhead (divinitas) so posited exists in this way, that it is present in the three persons so that it is modified in each through something else, like the species in the particular existents. If one does not wish to think the relationship according to this analogy, it will not be able to be thought in any way whatsoever, and both postulates, that of the unity as well as that of the Trinity, become confused, so that our proposition always collapses and consequently the point of the whole doctrine is destroyed, and it would be better to leave it in the simple elements yielded immediately by pious self-consciousness.[1]

It should be observed that this is exactly where dogmatics does leave the question. It is speculation, the effort to think the doctrine through, to move on to some sort of formula which will encapsulize the doctrine, which runs afoul of these problems. Schleiermacher is presenting a dilemma: if one refuses to be satisfied with the via negativa and the purely negative formulation of the Trinity, and if one refuses to accept the analogy of the species and its individual existents, the speculative effort sooner or later disintegrates. But if one does accept it, what of the other horn?

> But if, contrary to the protestation of a vast number who have always declared themselves for the purely

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[1] Ibid., 2:697f.

> negative way of formulation, one does choose to think according to this analogy, then this thinking can follow one of two ways, a more realistic and a more nominalistic pattern. Neither of the two accords the universal and the particular equal reality. Instead, the one states that the universal is the actual existent, the particular and individual is the subordinate and, in a certain sense, the nonexistent. The other claims the reverse, the individual is what really exists, and the universal is merely our consideration of the particulars taken together. The more emphasis placed on the former realistic style of thinking, the more stress is placed on the monotheistic pole, but the distinction of persons then recedes. The more emphasis placed on the latter nominalist style, the more clearly comes to light what is proclaimed in Christian consciousness, namely, the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but the closer one comes to falling into tritheism. No middle-way appears, between these two, so soon as the eternity of persons is affirmed.[1]

The moment that the immanent Trinity within and behind the economic Trinity is made into the content of the traditional formula, this dilemma must arise. The doctrine has no content other than that which is affirmed more completely in the doctrines surrounding the person and work of Christ and the presence of the Spirit within the Church. All that is required by those doctrines is the economic Trinity. To give any content to the doctrine itself is to attempt to refer a doctrinal statement to God in himself, an error which must lead to the difficulties mentioned.

This is entirely in accord with Schleiermacher's understanding of the dogmatic enterprise. He had noted at the outset:

> All dogmatic propositions, beyond the fact that they are descriptions of human states, can also be set forth in a

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[1] Ibid., 2:698.

> two-fold form: as concepts of divine attributes and as statements regarding the constitution of the world; these three forms have always existed side by side in dogmatics.[1]

Christian doctrines are always statements of a state of Christian self-consciousness. That state must have some sort of objective referent. The state of the self-consciousness is the result of a particular shaping or modification of the fundamental feeling of absolute dependence, a shaping or modification which occurs as a result of some particular objective facet of the universe. Thus dogmatic statements giving expression to that particular state of consciousness are indirectly statements about the world. That objective referent implicitly contained in the dogmatic statement is only a facet of the universe, of the totality of existents, however. In accord with the panentheist point of view which was noted previously in Schleiermacher's thought, i.e., the equation, but not identification, between the totality of finite causality and the divine causality, or the inherence of the universe in God, any statement of the modification of the feeling of absolute dependence, which is itself referred to the totality of being, is implicitly a statement about God. These second and third forms of doctrinal statements are not of equal value with the first, the pure expression of the Christian self-consciousness. Ideally, Christian dogmatics should limit itself to this first fundamental form of proposition, but Schleiermacher includes the latter two forms for the sake of completeness since they have become so much a part of the tradition. The test for the validity of propositions of the second and third class is whether or not they are reducible to propositions of the first class. If so, they are valid expressions of religious feeling; if not, they are illegitimate importations from and encroachments upon the fields of natural science or metaphysics.[1] This is re-enforced later: "All attributes which we credit to God cannot indicate anything specific in God, but only something specific in the way in which we refer our feeling of absolute dependence to him."[2] Thus all the divine attributes, indeed any statement about God, can be nothing but a statement of the experience of a particular relationship to God. Clearly any proposition which pretends to make a statement about God in se, however inadequate its terms and formulation may be acknowledged to be by the one making the proposition, is ruled out.

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[1] Ibid., 1:169.

Applying this to the doctrine of the Trinity, it is readily apparent that the economic Trinity is a possible understanding of the dogmatic proposition in that it is the statement of a relationship between the divine and creation. It affirms the reality of the relationship of redemption and sanctification achieved in Christ and the Christian Gemeingeist respectively. Thus the Trinity, while it may appear at first glance in its traditional formulation to be a proposition of the third class, i.e., one referring to divine characteristics, and while it may have long been interpreted in that fashion, is nevertheless reducible to a proposition of the first class, i.e., one expressing a particular modification of Christian self-consciousness. It cannot be understood as a proposition regarding God in se, such as any attempt to discern an immanent Trinity through the economic Trinity would make it.

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[1] Ibid., 1:170f.

[2] Ibid., 1:265.

Thus Schleiermacher is protecting the incomprehensible aseity of God when he allows no meaning to the trinitarian formula other than the economic. Not only is the economic Trinity the accurate and adequate translation of the requirements of Christian self-consciousness as that is expressed in the doctrines of the person and work of Christ and of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but any attempt to move through it to a doctrine of the immanent Trinity is more than unwarranted; it could be destructive of other doctrines. After having illustrated the dilemma and self-contradiction into which any attempt to think the doctrine of an immanent Trinity must fall, Schleiermacher advances his criticism of the attempt a further step.

> If the doctrine corresponds entirely to the pious self-consciousness which acknowledges the higher element in Christ and the Holy Spirit as the really and properly divine, the three persons should be completely identi-

> fied; but this, which is truly required in every way, is accomplished in fact in no ecclesiastical presentation.[1]

The properly dogmatic demand, that a particular state of Christian religious self-consciousness be translated into doctrinal formulae and that those formulae be placed in comprehensive connection with other doctrinal formulae, is fulfilled in the statement of the identity of the three trinitarian persons. This protects the Christian's community with God in Christ and in the Gemeingeist of believers. It presupposes that any attempt to distinguish inner-trinitarian persons one from another be performed in such a way that no inequality can be discerned among them. "This canon is fulfilled only if such a description of the distinction among the three persons can be given; but up until now this still seems to be an unresolved task."[2] He then notes that the concept of inner-trinitarian processions necessarily includes some notion of inequality. If the Son is begotten by the Father, then whatever that notion of generation entails, if it means anything, it means that the Son stands in a relationship of dependence with regard to the Father. The same is true of the Spirit, however his peculiar manner of procession is described and whether he is taken, with the Greek Church, to proceed from the Father or, with the Latin Church, to proceed from the Father and the Son. But this is precisely what must at all costs be avoided in the doctrine in order to maintain the central points of Christain faith, the presence of God in Christ and in the community of the faithful.

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[1] Ibid., 2:701.

[2] Ibid., 2:702.

The doctrine of the Trinity, because it has not the same value and importance for Christian faith as doctrines properly so called, has, even though the history of trinitarian theology is a long one, never been closed. The very fact that believers have for so many centuries been able to live with a "doctrine" in so unfinished and unsatisfactory a form indicates its peripheral position, its lack of proper content. Schleiermacher closes his treatment of the Trinity in the first edition of the Glaubenslehre with a clear suggestion of the direction which his thought would take in the essay comparing the Sabellian and Athanasian theologies.

> Now to share a few suggestions regarding these efforts lying before us: we must go back very far, and, because the fundamental positions came to light so early and have remained unchanged since, we must look to find the mistakes already present in the way in which they went to work setting out these positions. The first suggestion is this: they were much too concerned about avoiding the Sabellian manner of thought, as it is usually termed, while, for the sake of the two-fold union of the divine being with human nature, they posited an eternal two-fold difference within the divine nature, as the Nicene doctrine states it. Consequently it must once again be examined exactly what is threatened by that manner of formulation which, by contrast, certainly most strongly combats all Arianizing disparagements of the divine in Christ and the Spirit and what must be changed in it essentially and necessarily. This latter might prove to be nothing more than this, that no change in the highest being need be posited or that its activities, on which the union with human nature depends, be presented in another way as successive, as we must always do since we can conceive the divine causality in its eternity only as a decree, the fulfillment of which can

> only be thought by us in time. The second and, for the present, final suggestion is this. If it appears impossible to designate the first two persons in the Godhead as Father and Son but in doing so to think no dependence and inequality, it might be investigated whether it has been completely correct to call the divine in Christ all by itself the "Son of God," since Scripture always designates the whole Christ with this name and presents us only the term *Word* for the divine nature united with us, and usually without any particular terminology describes the union only as the indwelling of the fullness of the divinity. If the term "Son of God" encompassed only this scope sanctioned by Scripture, then the dependence unavoidably bound to it would be no purely internal relationship within the divine nature, but rather only the relation of the latter to its union with human nature. With reference to the Holy Spirit, in a similar fashion it would be advisable to investigate whether there is any reason or cause to posit another relation of him to the Son, besides the fact that the latter, that is, the whole Christ, sends him, and so here too, in order to avoid all dependency, it would only be a matter of how, if the Son is specified in this way, the Father becomes specified as one of the Trinity. But only through a complete critique, for which this is not the place, could these suggestions be clarified, and so it is right to call a halt here.[1]

That critique was supplied by Schleiermacher in his essay which evoked Möhler's digression in *Athanasius*. The three charges which Schleiermacher answers in Sabellius's name--that of impiety, of disregard for the doxology, and of "Judaizing"--and which he casts back against the Athanasian doctrine assume their full importance in light of the discussion of the *Glaubenslehre*. The only legitimate dogmatic use of the Trinity is to safeguard the presence of the divine in Christ and the Christian *Gemeingeist*. Clearly the Sabellian doctrine does precisely that. The Athanasian doctrine enmeshes itself in contradictions, whose net result is to call into question precisely that divine presence, because of the difficulty in affirming the identity of the Son and Spirit with the Father. This endangers the community of the Christian with God in Christ and the believing community, the very heart of Christian religious self-consciousness. Consequently, the Sabellian doctrine of the Trinity is (to use Möhler's phrase) "by far" preferred.

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[1] Ibid., 2:706-708.

Möhler's Critique of Schleiermacher's Sabellianism

Preliminary Questions

As Möhler had reflected Schleiermacher's thought and used it easily and accurately in *Einheit*, so in *Athanasius* he was the better able to criticize his Protestant contemporary sympathetically and intelligently. He is careful to note that in Schleiermacher's study, which he describes as "very perceptive," no judgment is made about the apostolicity of either the Sabellian or Athanasian trinitarian doctrine. In other words, by the standards of judgment employed in patristic studies of preceding centuries, no judgment of truth is made. Schleiermacher is not concerned with the question of which trinitarian theology is right and which wrong; his judgment is one of adequacy: which one better preserves and protects the central elements of Christianity. Thus Schleiermacher does not make a definite choice, proclaiming one to be true and condemning the other as false, although his preference in the article is clear. "I say the preference in the [article] is given to the Sabellian [doctrine]. For it does not determine which is the biblical, the revealed doctrine of the Trinity."[1] Möhler knows full well why no judgment is made. No decision is made on the question of which doctrinal position on the Trinity is the revealed one, because for Schleiermacher no doctrine of the Trinity is revealed. It is not an immediate utterance of Christian religious self-consciousness. As a summary of other Christian doctrines, that formulation of the Trinity is to be preferred which makes the least addition of its own to the content of Christian self-consciousness. Möhler continues:

> Rather [Schleiermacher's essay] seems to accept that the Redeemer was made God originally only in hymns, in poetic expressions and in rhetorical address, thus that the Christian faith has not definitely taught his divinity. Schleiermacher rules out as absolutely unchristian only this: if in Christ merely a human being is acknowledged, one who at some point had not been seized by the Holy Spirit, who is consequently not sinless. But whether Christ is truly God and so of the same nature as the Father, while a distinction of persons is still accepted, or whether he is of a nature subordinate to the Father and unequal to him, or whether he is absolutely identical with the Father, or however the relationship may finally be explained, so long as the superhuman and divine in Christ is acknowledged, Schleiermacher seems to view all this as an issue undecided by Christian revelation. It seems to him, as it were, accidental that the Catholic doctrine became catholic.[2]

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 273.

[2] Ibid.

Möhler refers to the three basic trinitarian positions with which he is concerned throughout Athanasius, the orthodox, the Arian and the Sabellian, and quite correctly sees that Schleiermacher is not interested in arguing for any one of them as exclusively true. The Trinity is of importance to Schleiermacher only in so far as it protects and guarantees the presence of God in Christ. That presence must be understood as the decisive element in Christ's life from its very first moment, or else the Redeemer cannot have been sinless. Möhler perceptively sees that in fact for Schleiermacher the presence of God in Christ is effectively equivalent to his sinlessness. This is the central distinctive element of Christianity. "Christianity is a particular form of piety in the teleological direction, which form is differentiated from all others in this, that every individual element in it is related to the consciousness of the redemption through the person of Jesus of Nazareth."[1] "The redemptive activity of Christ consists in the mediation of sinlessness and perfection."[2] Sin is defined as "contradiction between the sensible and the higher consciousness."[3] Christianity's distinctive characteristic is that it refers everything to the redemption accomplished by Christ. That redemption hinges upon his sinlessness, i.e., the complete absence of any disharmony between God-consciousness and sensible consciousness, or, put positively, the constant interrelation of the two. Consequently, the only Father-Son relationship which Schleiermacher cannot admit, as Möhler observes, is any form of adoptionism.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:80.

[2] Ibid., 2:252.

[3] Ibid., 2:8.

An Arian trinitarian theology must, of course, present problems for Schleiermacher because in separating the Father and Son, it destroys the community of believers with God through Christ and the Church. So, while seeing that the Arian way of relating Father and Son is not by itself impossible for Schleiermacher, for whom any formulation of inner-trinitarian relations is unnecessary and meaningless, Möhler nevertheless does not pursue the point, since Arianism becomes untenable for Schleiermacher on the Christological level. Thus Schleiermacher's Sabellianism is the question at issue in Möhler's critique.

The reason for Schleiermacher's preference for the Sabellian doctrine is that it avoids what he fears a trinitarian doctrine could so easily become: speculation. Möhler recognizes this:

> He explains the problem [the origin of the Catholic doctrine] as follows: the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity arose, starting at Alexandria, through Platonizing, or a purely philosophical, cosmological concern, i.e., through the desire to maintain a bridge from finite nature to the Infinite in the Son of God. For if this had not happened, he says, the Sabellian teaching on the Trinity would have developed, which accepts no distinction of person in the Godhead and teaches that this impersonal Godhead is the divinity

> in Christ and the Holy Spirit, but which also recognizes in Christ and the Holy Spirit particular revelations of God, for which reason the word "Trinity" is retained by it. Because of this intermixture of the human and the nonhuman there is so much vagueness in the Church Fathers regarding the formulation of the relation of the Son to the Father, Schleiermacher goes on. Since, on the other hand, the Sabellian theory is clear and definite in itself, for this reason the recommendations of originality and independence can hardly be denied it.[1]

Schleiermacher had indeed noted at the very end of his essay on the Sabellian and Athanasian theories that the latter was so involved in distinctions and negative formulae designed to avoid contradictions that it could do little but thread its way between them, while the former must be allowed precisely those qualities of "originality and independence."[2] The Sabellian doctrine is original for Schleiermacher in the sense that it is produced by nothing but the attempt to restate the contents of Christian religious self-consciousness; it is independent of all extraneous philosophical speculative concerns. This is its great strength for the Berlin theologian, the reason why he prefers it to the Athanasian theory.

After dutifully noting that the middle of his treatment of Athanasius and the Arian controversy is scarcely the place to respond to Schleiermacher at length, Möhler goes on to do so. He pinpoints three key contentions in

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 274.

[2] Theologische Zeitschrift 3 (1822): 408.

Schleiermacher's essay with which he disagrees. First, the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit are totally unintelligible in themselves and unnecessary. For if one once begins to personify divine attributes, such as the Logos of God, why should one cease before personifying them all? Second, the Sabellian theory protects the central elements characteristic of Christian piety as well as, if not better than, the Catholic doctrine. After all, it is diametrically opposed to the Arian Christology which endangers the availability of God in Christ for all believers, because the Sabellian theory identifies the divine element in Christ with the Father. By comparison, the Catholic doctrine appears somewhat temporizing in distinguishing the presence of God in Christ as the Son distinct from the Father. Third, the Sabellian Trinity is based on the relationship of God to the world. It springs directly out of the economy of salvation, which is the center of all religious and especially Christian religious feeling. It does not wander off into the realm of the purely transcendent as does the Catholic doctrine.

It is clear that the third of these key issues on which Möhler focuses in Schleiermacher's essay and to which he addresses himself, is the most important. In Schleiermacher's view, the Sabellian theory, by limiting itself to the economic level, is concerned with the heart of religious feeling. It is best able to serve the only task which a trinitarian theology can serve, that of preserving and restating other primary doctrines, because it is singlemindedly removed from non-religious speculative concerns. Only when religion and speculation are confused can one begin to multiply distinctions and dare to predicate them of God in himself, and so end up with personified attributes. The proper task of theology is the conceptual translation of religious feelings, all of which are self-conscious apprehensions of the relatedness of the world to God. It is on that God-world relation that the Sabellian theory rests. To move beyond statements of that relationship to statements about the transcendent God in himself may or may not be valid speculatively. But it is not theology, and it is not religion.

Möhler has to argue on Schleiermacher's ground in order to respond to these points. He has to defend the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity by showing that it can more adequately protect the interests of Christian doctrine than the Sabellian. But he goes further: he intends to strike at the very root of Schleiermacher's treatment of the Catholic Trinity by showing that it is indeed a doctrine necessary to the understanding of Christian faith in Christ and the Holy Spirit's presence in the Church and one which has a proper content of its own. First, however, he indicates that he does not regard apostolicity as a superfluous question. Briefly he argues against Schleiermacher's claim that the equation of Christ with God is to be found in the primitive Church only in the poetic imagery of hymns. He refers to the epistle of Barnabas, to the Shepherd of Hermas and to the epistles of Ignatius. If some may object that Barnabas may have come from an Alexandrian milieu, a fact which Möhler regarded as inconclusively demonstrated, no one can claim that the Shepherd or Ignatius emerge from such a background. He regards as most important, however, the writings of Irenaeus, who "so very strongly repudiated all philosophizing." Schleiermacher never discusses Irenaeus, although he is a second-century figure, quite apart from any Alexandrian influence, who gives clear testimony of the positions later clarified at Nicaea. "The ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity was proclaimed by him practically the most clearly of all ante-Nicene Fathers."[1] Möhler mentions also the apologists in whom, he writes, is often evidenced a current of thought exactly opposed to the Alexandrians on many issues.

> Now, how do they agree with one another in faith in Christ? Certainly the harmonious testimony from the very beginning and in all parts of the Church is to be explained in no way except by the conclusion that the ecclesiastical doctrine is apostolic tradition. But if the view that Christ was first made God merely in exaggerated effusions of sentiment is applied not only to the earliest Church but to the apostles themselves, then Schleiermacher has proceeded on a presumption which makes any agreement on this issue impossible.[2]

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 275.

[2] Ibid., p. 276.

Sooner or later, the question of apostolicity must be raised. Möhler's argument is that the very early widespread attribution of divinity to Christ can only be explained by accepting that doctrine as apostolic, that is, as belonging to the first generation of Christians. If one were to say that the testimony of that first generation is itself merely "sentiment," then one is appealing to some non-Christian standard of judgment, for the faith of that apostolic generation is the only criterion for faith finally available. If the accuracy of the apostolic witness is denied, Möhler argues, then the believer is cut off from Christ completely and can make no statements about him at all. Schleiermacher may not find the affirmation that Christ is God necessarily an expression of Christian self-consciousness. But to deny that it was a fact determining the self-consciousness of the first generation of Christians is an historical judgment, which calls into question the very standard by which any historical judgment on Christianity must be measured. He may dispute Möhler's evidence, but inevitably, once he undertakes the historical study of trinitarian doctrine, he must address the question of apostolicity, and, in so doing, he must judge one theory as concordant with apostolic teaching, and so right, and the other as destructive of it, and so wrong.

Möhler argues fairly briefly against the first two of the three points which he has taken as the most important reasons for Schleiermacher's preference for Sabellianism. The first is the statement that the Son is nothing other than the personified divine understanding. He rejects such a claim completely. The Son is not one attribute of the Father; he is the perfect image of the Father's being. This is the teaching of Nicaea, and it is found in ante-Nicene patristic sources where the Son is called not merely the Logos, but the justice, the wisdom, the life, and the power of the Father. Schleiermacher's failure to take account of Irenaeus is underscored when Möhler notes that the latter specifically denounced the Gnostic tendency to personify divine attributes. Irenaeus had done so on the ground that this was fundamentally to misunderstand the nature of God, who is not a collection of attributes, but _is_ each attribute completely. Thus in God all attributes interpenetrate one another, and cannot be distinguished from one another, save in a fashion _ad nos_. Lest this seem to support Schleiermacher's conviction that all predication of God is made in terms of the God-world relation and not of God in himself and so undergird his position in the third point which is to be discussed, that the Sabellian Trinity is quite properly only economic, Möhler adds:

> From this passage [_Adversus haereses_ 2, 13] some who understand Irenaeus as little as they do the Church's teaching on the Trinity have concluded that he accepted no distinction of persons; as if Irenaeus would have had to say "God is an amalgam of attributes," if, according to him, the Son were to be a person.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 277.

It is precisely the fact that Irenaeus does maintain that the Son is distinct from the Father while teaching that one attribute cannot be distinguished from all others in God, which indicates that for him the Son is not a personified attribute of the Father. This is constant patristic doctrine: in the divine nature, every attribute is in each attribute and each is in all. Thus the Son can only be the image of the Father, the fullness of all divine qualities. Why is the Son then so often called the divine Logos? Quite simply, writes Möhler, because it was biblical language and so, traditional. But from Justin on, when the Fathers spoke of the Logos having impressed his image on man, they clearly did not understand by this image man's intellect alone, but "his whole spiritual nature, his higher being."[1] The Logos himself was then much more than the divine intellect or understanding; he was "everything which he had expressed in man finitely in an infinite and eternal way." So God in himself is sometimes called the Logos, not only the Son. Should the distinction sometimes made between the logos prophorikos and the logos endiathetos seem to contradict this, one must recall that the Fathers were engaged in a pursuit of ever more precise language; that testing process aiming at clarification of terminology is to be seen in the context of the repeated affirmation of the divinity of the Son.

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[1] Ibid., p. 278.

One should observe that Möhler has explained nothing immanent about the Trinity in this refutation of the first strand which he selected from Schleiermacher's essay on Sabellianism. Indeed, it was his purpose to rebut an explanation. He has stressed the simple fact of apostolicity, basing that contention on the early widespread affirmation of the Son's divinity and distinction from the Father. Somehow that fact must be explained. Schleiermacher had done so by claiming that patristic doctrine personified a particular divine attribute, and had then shown such a process to be theologically naive. Möhler has sought to show that Schleiermacher triumphs over a straw man of his own making. The Fathers were far too astute to fall into so palpable an error, one which would cancel the very nature of God. Thus Möhler is not concerned at this point to offer an explanation of the Church's affirmation of an immanent Trinity; he is content merely to point to that affirmation and to demonstrate that Schleiermacher has failed to account for it.

Möhler's treatment of what he takes to be the second strand of Schleiermacher's argument indicates the way in which he understood the latter. Schleiermacher's point, as Möhler rehearses it, is that Sabellianism better protects the essentials of Christian piety. Möhler's response shows that he has placed Schleiermacher's historical study of the Sabellian theory of the Trinity against the full background of the Protestnat theologian's work. His reply has two steps:

first, he argues that Sabellianism arose out of a desire to satisfy the problems posed to human understanding by the doctrine of the Trinity, and second, he denies that Sabellianism succeeds in being clear and evident. From the shape of this response, it can be seen that Möhler interpreted Schleiermacher's claim that Sabellianism guards the doctrines central to Christianity to mean that the Sabellian trinitarian theory remained free, or at least freer, from speculation and so added nothing beyond what was contained in other primary Christian doctrines. It is those claims which he rebuts.

The fact that a theological doctrine satisfies a philosophical requirement is not a mark against that doctrine. Philosophical requirements are the demands of reason, and the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity is in accord with those demands, although Möhler adds that he means that in a sense other than Schleiermacher's. He begins by making it very clear that the mere fact that theological and philosophical interests coincide in a particular doctrine is not a stigma upon the doctrine; the statement that the Sabellian doctrine has taken questions arising out of demands of reason into acount in the formulation of its position does not disqualify that theology. It may perhaps prove disquieting to Schleiermacher who maintains that "the Sabellian theory was constructed purely from within itself without external factors."[1] Athanasius traced it to Stoicism; many others accused it of Judaizing, and often the proponents of Sabellianism did fall back on the Old Testament for support. The objections brought against the Catholic doctrine by the Sabellians were based on the ground of that doctrine's supposed incompatibility with reason, objections which the Sabellians thought their teaching avoided. Möhler does not argue the truth or falsity of these particular positions. He is content to point out that they indicate that Sabellianism, far from being a simple translation of Christian self-consciousness into a conceptual formula, was in fact grounded in speculation. It arose from the attempt to avoid the apparent contradictions between the Catholic Trinity and the canons of reason. The Catholic doctrine gave the appearance of such contradiction precisely because it did not begin by basing itself on those canons but by simply preserving the tradition. Subsequently it emerged that the seeming contradictions were indeed only apparent, but the Church did not fear to confront them in remaining faithful to apostolic doctrine.

Here Möhler, while always maintaining that there is no opposition between faith and reason, takes Schleiermacher's claim that Sabellianism is theological rather than speculative or philosophical, and transfers it to the Catholic doctrine.

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[1] Ibid.

> By contrast the Church has held purely to the tradition, however great the difficulties might be which emerged from its doctrine. It has not been afraid precisely because its doctrine was tradition, and it has conquered because its tradition is divine and God fights for his own. It was never its intention to yield even the least particle to fallen, human, finite understanding. Hence, whether the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Spirit could be conceptualized and described in some way, mattered little: it had no mandate to conceptualize it.[1]

Schleiermacher's praise of Sabellianism as marked by "inner certainty, clarity and simplicity" is extremely difficult to accept. Möhler emphasizes the controversy surrounding the actual content of the doctrine. It is only with great difficulty that one can arrive at some idea of what Praxeas, Noetus, Beryllus and Sabellius really taught, and always one's conclusions remain doubtful. This is not merely the result of temporal distance, nor the loss of primary sources, nor the later distortions of the victorious orthodox. Even the Fathers of the second and third centuries confessed themselves at a loss to comprehend the Sabellian theory. "But (I intend to say nothing of Tertullian and others) that Athanasius, this keen and thorough thinker, should not have understood it, certainly does not speak in favor of its clarity."[2] Yet according to Schleiermacher, the Fathers simply failed to grasp what the Sabellian theory was about. But, Möhler notes, what his Protestant contemporary holds to be the true Sabellian trinitarian theory is found in Athanasius. The Alexandrian bishop knew it, examined it, and rejected it. But even he, writing so close in time to Sabellius, was not certain that what he was rejecting was precisely what Sabellius had taught, for the witnesses to that teaching were so confused. One could scarcely claim that this is doctrine unmarked by difficulties.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 278f.

[2] Ibid., p. 279.

> Consequently whether Schleiermacher ought to accord Sabellianism those previously mentioned predicates of clarity, etc., I very much doubt. But, in any case, the Sabellianism which Schleiermacher has discovered is clear and simple, whether or not Sabellius may ever have taught it.[1]

Thus, in responding to what he sees as the second principal strand of Schleiermacher's argument for the Sabellian Trinity over the Athanasian, that the former is free from the speculative concerns of the latter and is without its subtleties and problems, Möhler stresses that in fact it is the doctrine eventually accepted as orthodox which simply maintains the tradition in spite of seeming rational difficulties, while Sabellianism emerges from the attempt to answer them, and that the Sabellian trinitarian theory is beset with problems, gave rise to many variants, proved difficult of comprehension to contemporaries, and still cannot be expounded with certitude by Schleiermacher himself.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 279f.

The Central Issue: the Formulation of the God-world Relationship

Both of the first two strands which Möhler lifts up from Schleiermacher's presentation are dependent on the third. Fundamentally Schleiermacher's preference for Sabellianism is based on his contention that by limiting itself to the economy of salvation and eschewing affirmations about the transcendent God in himself, Sabellianism has centered on the God-world relation, the religious aspect of the feeling of absolute dependence, as that is expressed in the particular Christian doctrines of the presence of God in Christ and in the believing community. It is this third strand which occupies Möhler for far the greater part of his digression on Schleiermacher's essay of 1822.

He begins by stating clearly and concisely the basis of his criticism of Schleiermacher's position: one cannot maintain the significance of the economic Trinity unless one likewise affirms the immanent Trinity.

> If a Christian is asked whether God is wise, good and just in himself, he will hardly hesitate to answer "yes" to the question and to say that he has revealed himself to be so because he is so even apart from his revelation. Such a revelation of God is possible, first of all, because he is so in himself, and he would not have revealed himself so if he were not so in himself. In reality, it should never have been questioned whether God in himself is as he appears in revelation. In itself the former does not affect us at all, but is infinitely important to us for the sake of the latter; we are not really and truly certain of the latter, if the former is not true. In this conviction theologians have long asserted a transcendence of our knowledge of God, and, although they have exaggerated the case, this

> conviction was correct. So it is also with the doctrine of the Trinity: because God has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Spirit, he exists so apart from all revelation, and it is not a certainty for us that, as the Christian maintains, God is all this for us, if he is not this in himself.[1]

God does not reveal propositions, he reveals himself. If what he reveals is not himself, then he has revealed nothing. The God-world relationship reveals God as he is in himself. If it does not, then it is an unreal relationship and, in fact, there is no revelation and man is cut off from God. This is the basis of all statements about God in himself, the "transcendence of our knowledge of God." Möhler seems to be saying that a statement of fact need not be a statement of comprehension, that one can affirm of God that something is so, but not how it is so. Thus the immanent Trinity can be affirmed as true without pretending to some sort of intellectual grasp of God in se, because if it is not true, then the economic Trinity loses its reality and the economy of salvation becomes an empty allegory.

Möhler has here struck a blow at the very heart of Schleiermacher's theology. Schleiermacher had distinguished three forms of propositions in dogmatic theology, those describing states of Christian self-consciousness, those describing attributes of God, and those stating elements in the constitution of the world.[2] The first form is that of propositions which express the Christian modification of the feeling of absolute dependence. That "feeling" is the pre-conceptual apprehension of absolute receptivity, in which all reciprocity is excluded. It is the apprehension of a relation, which, viewed religiously,is interpreted as the experience of God-world relation. Thus, Schleiermacher's three forms of dogmatic propositions are statements about a relationship and each of that relationship's two poles.[1] A relationship, if it is not purely external, must in some way affect the poles of the relation, must be rooted in those poles. There cannot be a relation which is entirely determinative of the very being of one pole, but which expresses nothing intrinsic to the being of the other pole. Yet this is precisely the God-world relation envisioned by Schleiermacher. On the one side is the finite universe completely and utterly dependent upon God; on the other side of the relation is God, absolute, transcendent, unrelated. The aseity of the the divine pole of the relation is constantly stressed by Schleiermacher. Thus, when writing of the second form of dogmatic propositions, he warns: "All properties which we attribute to God can not designate anything specific in God, but only something specific in the way we refer our feeling of absolute dependence to God."[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 280.

[2] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:169.

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[1] Ibid., 1:187f.

[2] Ibid., 1:265. The unrelatedness of God presents a particular difficulty within Schleiermacher's own thought

But is God then really related to the universe? The core of Christian doctrine according to Schleiermacher himself is the presence of God in Christ and the Church, two specifications of the God-world relation which demand the participation of the very being of God. If that relation is real, if the economy of salvation establishes a bond between both poles, then God must really express himself in the relationships of salvation and sanctification. The relation is rooted in God himself. Nor is this idle speculation about the incomprehensible Godhead. It is the "transcendence of our knowledge of God" which affirms statements about the immanent roots of the God-world relation without rendering those roots within the Godhead less mysterious. The immanent roots of that relation within the human pole were to become of central importance to Möhler as a result of this critique of Schleiermacher, and his thought on the openness of the human to that relation lies in back of the ecclesiology which emerged in Symbolik. Now, with his attention fixed on the divine pole of the relation between God and universe, Möhler maintains that the reality of that relation, the economic Trinity which is the center of Christian faith, must, if all actuality is not to be drained

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with its governing principle of universal relativity as expounded in his lectures on dialectics. See the laying-out of this problem in Spiegler, as well as the discussion of the subtleties of the treatment of the Trinity in Williams, pp. 139-157.

from it, entail the affirmation, although not the comprehension, of the immanent Trinity. If the God who is present in Christ and the Church really is God, then there must be some immanent foundation in the nature of God which gives rise to the relationship established by that presence.

As further prologue to his discussion of this fundamental third strand of Schleiermacher's essay, Möhler offers a comment on two opposed ways of formulating the God-world relation, and a third middle course.

> We can express the relationship of Arianism to Sabellianism in this way: according to the former, God is separated from the world, according to the latter, God and world collapse into one another. Catholicism, however, holds God and the world apart, even while God stands in innermost connection with the world.[1]

The two heresies are described by their respective results. In doing so, Möhler makes them into archetypes for ways of formulating the God-world relation, tendencies which continue to his own day. The deist God of the eighteenth century whose only relation to the universe was as creator stands in the same perennial current as the Father-God of Arianism who remained aloof from creation with the Logos, a _tertium quid_ between God and man, as a buffer. In the unpublished draft of an introduction of _Athanasius_, Möhler had written of a direction of religious thought which ended in dry moralism. This was Arianism-deism which removed God from redemption and sanctification and so reduced both to ethical conversion and moral effort. Throughout Athanasius, whose full title proclaims it a study of the Church "especially in the battle with Arianism," Möhler justifies his description of its result as the separation of God and the world. But his statement that in Sabellianism "God and the world collapse into one another" remains to be demonstrated, and the identity of the contemporary styles of religious thinking of which it is a type must be revealed.

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[1] Möhler, _Athanasius_, pp. 280f.

In responding to the third element which he has selected from Schleiermacher's essay, Möhler begins with an argument which he recognizes has always been made against the Sabellian trinitarian theory and which he regards as unanswerable.[1] The scriptural data of the economy of salvation are the basis for the economic Trinity which is all that Sabellianism will allow. But those very data are destroyed without the acceptance of a doctrine of the immanent Trinity. Scripture is very definite that all things are created by the Father through the Son. Schleiermacher disputes the exegesis of the first verses of the fourth Gospel which both sets the Logos over against God and identifies the Logos with God. Möhler is perfectly willing to argue the sense of the words in the opening of the Johannine prologue, but also insists that this is but one citation among many which distinguish Father and Son from the beginning.

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[1] Ibid., p. 281.

This is a stumbling-block for the Sabellian theory which understands the Son as the revelation of the Godhead as redemptive. Hence, before the moment of redemption, "the Son" is meaningless. The term describes the divine presence in the incarnation, and so has no referent before the birth of Christ. How then can a Sabellian understand the statement that the Father creates through the Son? One cannot confine oneself to the economic Trinity and claim to account for the testimony of scripture regarding the God-world relation. For scripture does not parcel out particular moments in that relation on a one-to-one pattern. The Father cannot be understood as God in his creative activity alone, the Son as God in his redemptive activity, and the Spirit as God in his sanctifying activity; the Trinity cannot be three successive revelations in the history of salvation, if scripture is to be respected. Scripture speaks of two persons of the Trinity simultaneously active: Father and Son are both involved in the divine creative activity.

Further, scripture speaks of the Son enlightening all men. But how is this possible if the Son is an empty concept until the incarnation? Can the Sabellian escape without negating all revelation prior to the Christian dispensation? Creation itself is a revelation; Sabellianism makes creation the revealing activity of the Father. But scripture says that all revelation comes through the Logos-

Son. Creating "belongs" to the Father and revealing to the Son; but since creating and revealing are simultaneous, both the Father and the Son are active.

> John says: the same one through whom the world was created, later redeemed man, i.e., it is the same divinity revealing itself. Not only is the divinity the same in creation as in redemption, but the revelation of the divinity in Christianity is the same as in the beginning. But according to Sabellius the divinity was the same certainly, but its revelation was different.[1]

In scripture there is no difference in revelation; all revelation is through the Son.

The same sorts of difficulties arise for the Sabellian theory with regard to scriptural statements about the Spirit. Saint Paul says that Abraham was reckoned as just before God through faith. Thus there were just and holy men before Christianity.

> Justice and holiness, however, will be the same at all times, in Christianity and before Christianity, and no one will want to posit an essential difference, even if the least of believers is greater than the greatest prophet. Through whom else did they become holy and just, who were so, except through the Son and the Holy Spirit? For in any other way it is absolutely impossible. How may a Sabellian explain this simply and without subterfuge, since according to him the Son and Spirit, and with them also the true spirituality of man, are later revelations of God?[2]

The Spirit's activity under the Old Testament can be seen also in prophecy and in the inspiration of pre-Christian scripture, for the testimony of scripture itself makes no distinction between the Spirit of God in the old and new covenants. Möhler mentions several New Testament texts (Acts 4, 16; 28, 25; 1 Peter 1, 11; 2 Peter 1, 21) which identify the Spirit who spoke through the prophets as the Spirit of Christ. He adds that the power of miracles is generally attributed to the Spirit, and that, once again, no difference is made between Old and New Testament miracles. Lastly, the Spirit was active during the lifetime of Christ, at the latter's conception and baptism. The two persons are then active simultaneously, not as successive appearances of the Godhead. "How should the Holy Spirit now be merely the union of the divinity with the Christian Church?"[1] The Sabellian theory which, according to Schleiermacher, answers the requirements of salvation history without wandering off into ungrounded speculation, in fact completely contradicts the scriptural data regarding God's activity throughout that history. Without the immanent Trinity, the economic Trinity, as presented in scripture, cannot stand.

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[1] Ibid., p. 283.

[2] Ibid.

To this point, Möhler has followed arguments against Sabellianism familiar from the Fathers. He does not engage in any discussion of the vexed question of what is to be identified as the actual teaching of Sabellius and what is due to some other proponent of the broader tradition of modalist monarchianism. He has alluded to the difficulty of sifting and distinguishing the various levels and origins of this way of conceptualizing the Godhead when he notes that the Sabellianism which Schleiermacher himself propounds seems to him to be closest to that of Damian, the Monophysite Coptic patriarch of Alexandria (569-605).[1] Möhler's refusal to enter this complex question is a reminder that, throughout this digression, his interest is not in Sabellianism, but in Schleiermacher's Sabellianism. For twenty-five pages, he leaves the theological debates of the fourth century in order to engage in theological debate with his contemporary in Berlin. He is not refuting an ancient heresy; he is pursuing an argument of the utmost import for his own thought. He has selected three key strands in Schleiermacher's essay on Sabellianism, and is now prepared to draw what he believes to be the necessary conclusion from the third, most important strand: that Schleiermacher's Sabellianism collapses God and the world together. He has used the familiar patristic arguments as a way of getting into the line of thought he intends to follow. He summarizes those arguments:

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[1] Ibid., p. 284.

> The Son and the Holy Spirit (of the New Testament) were thus not active, according to Sabellius, in the

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[1] Ibid., p. 280. It is possible that Möhler intended this reference to carry a touch of scholarly sarcasm. In stressing that Sabellianism is not at all that clear, readily understandable doctrine which Schleiermacher depicts, but is instead marked by diverse interpretations and great confusion within the sources themselves, he traces Schleiermacher's particular variant to an obscure source especially removed from the main stream.

> creation, indeed, not before the redemption, while according to the doctrine of the Church, they were. Everything depends on this.[1]

Möhler draws the consequences of these two teachings in accord with the scriptural presentation of the Logos-Son as the one who enlightens, the source of all rationality, and of the Spirit as the one who sanctifies. If one holds the Catholic doctrine and affirms an immanent Trinity, which means that the Son and Spirit were active with the Father from the very beginning of the God-world relation, then man was from that very beginning related to Father, Son, and Spirit. "He was son of God through his communion with the true Son of God, and was holy in the Holy Spirit."[2] If one holds the Sabellian doctrine and denies an immanent Trinity, thus maintaining that the Son and Spirit are revelations of the Godhead which announce new stages in the God-world relation, and so were not active in the initial moment of that relation, then "man could not be son of God, he could not be in the real sense, in the sense of Irenaeus, reasonable and holy."

Now Möhler makes an important step. If man's relationship to God in the beginning was one of pure dependence as creature to creator, without knowledge of God (which comes through the Son) or participation in the holiness of God (which comes through the Spirit), man's separation from

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[1] Ibid., p. 284. [2] Ibid.

God was intrinsic to his situation. He must inevitably have been bound to creatures, for creatures were all he knew, the creator being as yet unrevealed. That separation from God, that lack of God-consciousness, is sin. Sin was the natural condition of the first man. It was the consequence of the stage of the God-world relation. There was no choice of this situation by man, no possibility that he could know of any other situation, no possibility that any other situation could exist. There is very little meaning to the concept of sin. "According to the system of Sabellius we will hardly have to speak in any way of sin and the guilt of sin in a real sense."[1] Since man is created and so dependent, but with no direction given to that sense of dependence, he will necessarily direct it toward creation, the only existent outside himself he knows. "Consequently, according to Sabellianism polytheism is an absolutely necessary occurrence in history." These are the results of denying that the Son is an eternal inner-trinitarian person.

Similar disastrous consequences can be drawn from that denial with regard to the Holy Spirit. While admitting that Sabellius's doctrine on the Spirit is difficult to decipher because of the few references preserved,[2] Schleiermacher interprets the Spirit in Sabellianism to be the

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[1] Ibid., p. 285.

[2] _Theologische Zeitschrift_ 3 (1822): 380f.

Christian Gemeingeist. Since Möhler's critique is directed against his contemporary and not the third-century theologian, he accepts Schleiermacher's reading of the sources as correct. "According to the teaching of Sabellius, the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the totality (of all the faithful)."[1] The Spirit is the presence of divinity in the Church as the Son is that presence in Christ. The Spirit then, as Möhler understands Schleiermacher, is related to the finite, the human, in the Church in the same way that the Son is related to the humanity of Christ. Schleiermacher had wanted to avoid saying that each individual believer is Christ, as would be true "if the Spirit as such were in each individual,"[2] and so had made the community the locus of the Spirit. But now, Möhler urges, it is difficult to see why the Church is not recognized by Sabellius-Schleiermacher as God. "For we worship the whole Christ, precisely because the divinity is inseparable from the humanity and both make up one life." The union between the divine and human in the Church, i.e., the Spirit, must be of the same pattern as the union between the divine and human in Christ, i.e., the Son. Were there a difference in the two unions, that difference would necessitate some distinction between these two modes of the Godhead's self-revelation, a distinction which must exist in the divine pole of the relation and so leads to exactly the sort of immanent distinction in the Godhead that Schleiermacher's Sabellianism is supposed to avoid. For the Protestant theologian, the Spirit is divine existence in the Church; it arises with the appearance of the Church, having no existence apart from the Church. The Son is divine existence in Christ; he arises with the incarnation. "But this holds good for the universe at large, which is united to the Father according to this same view in the way humanity is joined to divinity in Christ, and in the way the Church is joined to the Holy Spirit."[1] Möhler is very cautious to quote Schleiermacher directly at this point, lest his paraphrase do the latter an injustice.

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[1] Möhler, Athansius, p. 285.

[2] Theologische Zeitschrift 3 (1822): 381.

> The person of the redeemer did not exist previously in such a fashion that later the divinity united itself with him; rather, the person came into existence as the union did. And, in the same way, the Church did not exist and subsequently the divinity unite with it; rather the Church's coming into being and the Godhead's becoming Spirit were one. Thus each personification of the Godhead, both the second and the third, is creative. How much more is this the case with the first [personification], and the coming into being of the world coincide with the divinity's becoming Father.[2]

Then, is not the universe divine, for it is related to God-as-Father in the same way as the humanity of Christ is related to God-as-Son? Earlier Möhler had charged that in Sabellianism polytheism was a necessary part of man's history. Now he supports this: the universe truly is divine for the consistent Sabellian. This is true of the universe as a whole. The individual within the universe is not divine, any more than the individual member of the Church. But both the whole universe and the whole Church are. Schleiermacher is again quoted: "All vital forces in the world are related to the Father as the gifts of grace in the Church are to the Spirit."[1] Previously Schleiermacher had written that gifts of grace were the product of the combination of the divine in the Church, the Spirit, with the unique qualities and abilities of individuals.

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 285.

[2] Theologische Zeitschrift 3 (1822): 384, quoted by Möhler, Athanasius, pp. 285f., where he mistakenly gives the reference as p. 382.

> Every spiritual capacity of believers with which the Spirit of the whole could unite itself became a unique *charisma*, a unique effect of the Spirit, whose nature was localized in it in a unique fashion. And, properly understood, this can now give a rough explanation of Sabellius's point of view. The Spirit becomes *charisma* only through the fact that he is united with a power or function of the human soul and reveals himself through it. According to this [analogy] the utterly simple unity of the divine nature can become a *schema* or a *prosopon* in Sabellius's sense only by being united with something other but without becoming something other in itself through this [union], as the Spirit is one and the same in all gifts.[1]
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> Thus if the second *prosopon* completes his entire function, present in the person of the redeemer, and the Spirit fulfills his, to wit, the vitalization and sanctification of individual human beings, while he is

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[1] Möhler, *Athanasius*, p. 286, paraphrasing *Theologische Zeitschrift* 3 (1822): 386.

[2] *Theologische Zeitschrift* 3 (1822): 382.

> in the Church, and if, as we have seen, the Father's function is creation, preservation and the giving of the law, which here symbolically represents everything which can be actualized spiritually without the redemption and only in preparation for it, then in fact there is nothing else to be said but this: because the selfsame Godhead is united with the world, it becomes Father, the first prosopon, recognizable in all the animating forces which make up the connections of the organic world, and which are related to the Father as the charismata are to the Spirit.[1]

So, the vitality of the universe, the vitality we discover within ourselves, is the presence of the divine Being within us in the peculiar way which characterizes its presence as Father. Möhler describes this as "idealized idolatry." The transcendent has been undermined. "And, for this reason, I said that in Sabellianism God and the world collapse into one another."[2]

The Rejection of Panentheism as the Grounding for Ecclesiology

This line of criticism of Sabellius-Schleiermacher is of crucial importance for understanding the movement of Möhler's own thought, especially as it is reflected in his central ecclesiological preoccupation. The connection with his theology of the Church as it had found expression in Einheit is clear when he refers to the Holy Spirit in Schleiermacher's presentation of the Sabellian theory as the Spirit of the whole. Once again it is the question of the identification of the Spirit of God and the Christian Gemeingeist. Möhler had spoken of the "hopeless pantheism" which is the result of that identification. At this point in Athanasius, he has elaborated that simple statement. But a further step has been taken. In Einheit, he had tried to avoid pantheism by panentheism. In this he had followed Schleiermacher, who had not simply equated the Holy Spirit with the communal spirit of the Church, but who had made that Gemeingeist the only Spirit that in any way affected man. That panentheism is, as has been said, a slippery path to tread, one from which it is all too easy to slide into pantheism. Möhler now moves past it to a new way of formulating the God-world relationship. That new way is not given its statement until Symbolik. In 1827, Möhler was not prepared to do more than indicate the reasons for dissatisfaction with the panentheism which underlay his first book two years earlier and which was allowed to surface clearly at only a few points, most notably the important section 31. His panentheist way of relating God and world had closely paralleled Schleiermacher's; it is in criticizing Schleiermacher that Möhler's own thought moves forward.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 383f.

[2] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 286.

The criticism found in these important pages of Athanasius der Grosse where Möhler speaks of his contemporary's collapsing God and the world into one another, is that Schleiermacher cannot hold together the transcendence and aseity of God with the reality of his relatedness to creation. It was noted above that Schleiermacher's three forms of dogmatic propositions are statements about the God-world relation and its two poles. One of those poles, however, the divine, is affirmed as absolutely transcendent. Because the relation is one of utter dependence on the part of creation, with no reciprocity, the divine pole is the exclusively active pole. All determinations of that activity are located in the manner of reception on the part of the finite pole. Schleiermacher has emphasized that the attributes of God designate nothing in God, but are rather statements of the way in which man experiences the God-world relation.[1] Möhler has raised the problem which is inherent here: if the relationship as we experience it is not the revelation of God himself, if it is determined solely by our receptivity, by our way of being passive, by the conditions and limitations of our experiencing, if all determination is in the manner of reception and not in the divine activity, then how is God's relatedness in any way real? The God-world relation is affirmed by Schleiermacher with great clarity, as the central concern of religion and of theology. But with the divine pole of the relation wrapped in perfect aseity and unbridgeable transcendence, the relation itself must take on a peculiar form. The finite universe is founded in God. Its system of reciprocal causality is certainly not to be equated with the utterly transcendent divine causality, even in its totality. But the total finite causal nexus, although not itself the divine activity, is coextensive with that activity. The full extent of our experience of the creative and preservative activity of God is our experience of the total causal network of the universe. Möhler had summed this up: "He who created the whole can only be known from the whole because he has wholly revealed himself only in the whole."[1] God's transcendent causality is posited behind the finite system of causality. The only determination of that posited relation, however, comes from the conjunction of divine activity and the network of finite activity. God is revealed as Father, according to Schleiermacher, because his divine creative power is united with the finite vitality of all created power. The question which must arise is this: if this is the only way in which God is determinate, if it is only in conjunction with the finite that the divine is particularized and so becomes capable of relatedness in the only sense of relation that is real for us, why posit the transcendent God? If the only God who can be experienced in the God-world relation is the God who is coincident with finite causality, with the universe, then why go on to that mysterious absolute who is the other pole of a relation which is not really a relation in any sense that can be grasped? One current of thought within Sabellianism had identified the Godhead, the Monad, with the Father, making the Son and Spirit later revelations. Another, the more consistent, had envisioned Father, Son, and Spirit as all revelations of the Monad. Möhler understands Schleiermacher as standing in continuity with the latter approach.[1] The question may be posed in these terms: why posit the Monad when the Father, Son, and Spirit are the God who is related to us, and it is the God-world relation which is the proper concern of religion and theology? Since theology is the conceptual translation of Christian religious self-consciousness which is the apprehension of the God-world relation, why should Schleiermacher go beyond God as he is related to us, beyond Father, Son, and Spirit, beyond the divine activity which is coincident with the universe, the humanity of Christ, and the community of believers, to God as he is in himself, the Monad, the God who can only be affirmed as related but not conceived or experienced as such? Why insist on panentheism when pantheism is all that is required?

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 1st ed., 1:265f.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

Möhler's claim that Schleiermacher's Sabellianism collapses God and the world into one another is not, then, merely another charge of pantheism by one who has failed to grasp the panentheist position which Schleiermacher tries to maintain. Rather, if the understanding of Einheit and Athanasius presented here is correct, Möhler has seen the distinction between the pantheist and panentheist views very clearly, has worked out the latter in his own thought, and has found that it dissolves into the former. Schleiermacher might indignantly deny that his theology placed Christianity on a pantheistic base.[1] But it is precisely because the author of Einheit in der Kirche had been so much in tune with the author of the Glaubenslehre that he is able to be more consistent in pursuing the latter's panentheism than the latter himself has been. The Tübingen theologian has recognized that what prevents Schleiermacher's panentheism from slipping into "hopeless pantheism" is the affirmation of a transcendent God behind his revelation, a God who by his absolute aseity is unrelatable in any sense that can be understood and who is yet related in the threefold fashion which is the only reality of the Trinity. But Möhler has also recognized that such a God is an arbitrary affirmation, i.e., one unrequired by any demand within the system of Schleiermacher's theology. Such an affirmation, unnecessary

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 295. This accords with Möhler's claim that Schleiermacher's brand of Sabellianism is closest to that of the sixth-century Coptic patriarch, Damian, who was accused of so sharply distinguishing the Monad from its three revelations that he effectively turned

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the Trinity into a Quaternity, ibid., p. 280. See Adolf von Harnack, History of Dogma, 3rd ed., trans. N. Buchanan (New York: Dover Publications, 1961 repr.), 4:125, n. 1.

[1] Schleiermacher, Schleiermachers Sendschreiben über seine Glaubenslehre an Lücke, p. 24.

to the formulation of the content of Christian self-consciousness, seems to be an intrusion of the philosophical "speculative" thinking that Schleiermacher is determined to avoid. To be consistent with his own thinking, the postulate of the God behind the revelations should be eliminated.[1] Once it is eliminated, however, and God is the divine activity which is united with the vital force of the universe, panentheism has become pantheism. Möhler writes:

> Apart from these evolutions, nothing may be said of the Godhead as a Monad which is neither Father nor Son nor Spirit. This seems to have occurred to Gregory of Nazianzen, when he says that, while the Sabellians reduce all to One, they destroy each; he dubbed them, therefore, the *atheia*, as the Arians the *polytheia*. Because they specifically say of no one of the three that he is a person, but rather, according to them, the Father as well as the Son and the Spirit are only revelations, manifestations, developments of the Monad of which nothing is known, since it reveals itself only as Father, Son, and Spirit, but not as Monad, everything disappears which the Christian contemplates under "God." This seems to me now to be the inner and essential reason for which the Church could never accept it: in it, God and the world collapse into one another.[2]

Möhler's concern, it quickly becomes clear, is not primarily for the integrity of the divine pole of the God-world, or more accurately, God-man relation, but for the integrity of the finite pole. That concern is obvious in the first consequence he draws from the pantheism of Schleiermacher-Sabellius: it destroys human freedom.

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[1] Although I do not mean to suggest any conscious parallel on Möhler's part, it is interesting to note the common morphology of the argument presented here and Fichte's critique of Kant, in which he urged the needlessness of postulating the thingin itself within the context of *The Critique of Pure Reason*.

[2] Möhler, *Athanasius*, pp. 288f.

> According to the Sabellian doctrine of the Trinity, man did not fall. Had he seen the Father in the Son before Christianity, and was he sanctified in the Holy Spirit so that he could have fallen from his blessed state through sin? Then, consquently, he was not redeemed from a free fall; Christianity is not redemption, and man is not reborn in it. Rather the Godhead has only unfolded itself in a fashion which had never existed before. Christianity is a new evolution of the Godhead, through which the original incompleteness of creation is likewise overcome, and, when it is accomplished, creation is fulfilled since the divinity in its total fullness pours itself into it.[1]

Möhler's attention is drawn to the effect on the finite of this "collapse of God and the world into one another." If the only divinity that matters, the only divinity that can be posited, is the divinity related to man, and if that divine Being is a process of evolution whose embodiment is progressively creation, Christ, and Church, or man, redeemed man, and ecclesial man, then the human is really reduced to the material of God's self-development. Fallen man is only incomplete man, because he is the expression of the first stage of this divine process. If so, then man's original freedom, his integrity before the divine is an illusion. This is why the third of Schleiermacher's reasons, for preferring the Sabellian doctrine of the Trinity, that it avoids speculative statements about immanent relations within the Godhead while safeguarding the God-man relation expressed in the doctrines of Christ and the Church, is rejected by Möhler. In fact, the Sabellian doctrine of Trinity proves destructive of that God-man relation because it destroys the integrity of both its poles. The Catholic doctrine is the attempt to maintain the freedom of both God and man and their relationship, and so it answers the needs of Christian piety far better than the Sabellian.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 286f.

In doing so, the Catholic doctrine insures the completeness and unsurpassability of Christian revelation. For, Möhler points out, if God is an evolutionary process, which unfolds itself in creation, and if the activity of that process is entirely divine, creation being simply the receptive material or expression of it, then there are no intrinsic reasons why that process may not continue, producing a totally new relation of God and man, a new "person" in the economic Trinity, expressed in a totally new stage of human development. Once again Möhler turns an advantage claimed by Schleiermacher for Sabellianism into an advantage for the Athanasian or Catholic doctrine. Schleiermacher had charged that there was no reason in the Catholic doctrine of the immanent Trinity to stop at three persons. Since he regarded the immanent Trinity to be personifications of divine attributes, there was no apparent reason to limit the number of inner-trinitarian persons. Möhler had rejected the claim that such a personifying process lay behind the

Catholic doctrine in his answer to what he distinguished as the first of Schleiermacher's three principal points. The Protestant theologian had attempted to safeguard the Sabellian theory from this same charge, that there is no intrinsic reason to limit the possible revelations of the Godhead to three, by emphasizing that no other revelations, no other modes of the God-man relation, were required by the interests of Christian piety. "But if we proceed from religious interests," Möhler responds, "and determine accordingly the number of divine prosopa, we at the present time will be able to determine whether there are yet some prosopa to come to light or only what has already appeared, just as little as they knew in the pre-Christian period that, in addition to the creative prosopon, mankind would in the future learn of a redemptive one and Church-constructive one."[1] The Catholic doctrine holds that God is Father, Son and Spirit eternally, not in succession, and that, therefore, there are no surprises in store, since man has been related to the whole Godhead from the beginning. Thus Christianity is not merely one moment in the evolution of God's self-expression in man.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 287.

[2] It should be noted that Möhler is not denying the possibility of process within God or within man. He is attacking the idea that there is an evolution of God of which man is the expression.

There are few statements, Möhler writes, which sum up the central elements of Christian piety so well as John 3, 1: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son so that anyone who believes in him may not be lost, but may have eternal life." But this statement makes little sense within the Sabellian context. One reason is that the Father sends the Son into the world as Son, according to John; the pre-existence of the Son and his distinction from the Father are assumed. That is the theological presupposition of this Johannine statement of the God-man relation. But there is also an anthropological presumption. John emphasizes that the Father loved man and sent his Son to him, when man was a sinner, separated from God, and did not love in return.

> But if man's circumstance was a necessary one, and he had to be such as he was when the Son and the Holy Spirit had never as yet shown themselves in act, how can it be a case of God's love and God's mercy to free us from a situation into which we did not place ourselves, but rather into which we were put without our own fault? In the Sabellian theory the whole pre-Christian period appears in an essentially different light than it does in the Catholic faith, and consequently so does Christianity itself. Redemption and sanctification in Christ and the Holy Spirit is, according to the latter, a restoration of the beginning, a return to the beginning. Whence the expressions "rebirth," "new creation," "new man." This is so because man in his origin was as he again should be through Christianity; it is so because in the beginning the Father was already active in the Son with the Spirit. In Sabellianism mankind is indeed raised higher through Christianity than before, but it is not a restoration, for, according to it, we were not at the beginning what we have become through Christianity. In a word, Christianity is a natural stage in the development of mankind. And because this development

> stands in the closest connection with the evolution of the Godhead, to that same degree it becomes difficult to hold the Father and creation, the redeemer and the redeemed, the Holy Spirit and the Church apart from one another, and so the first evolution of the divinity became the world, the second the redemption, if one chooses to put it that way, and the third the Church.[1]

This is a very clear expression of Möhler's primary concern: the collapse of God and the world into one another destroys any understanding of human freedom and integrity. To accomplish what Schleiermacher intended by Sabellianism, the protection of the central elements of Christian religious self-consciousness, Christ and the Church, redemption and sanctification, one must guarantee through the Trinity an understanding of the God-man relation which maintains the transcendence of God and the freedom of man. The Catholic doctrine of the Trinity accomplishes this, because by rooting the God-man relation in God, that is, by making the relation of God to man an expression outside the Godhead of a real relation within the Godhead, God is really involved in the God-man relationship while simultaneously affirmed as truly being one pole of the relationship. The divine pole cannot be telescoped into the finite pole. The human pole, at the same time, is seen to be completely dependent, completely receptive in the relationship, but integral in its dependence. Man stands before God in complete dependency, but he stands before God, not in him.

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 288.

The significance of this critique of Schleiermacher's Sabellianism for Möhler's ecclesiology becomes apparent near the end of this digression in Athanasius. The Catholic doctrine of the Trinity certainly avoids Arianism by its assertion that the Son is God no less than the Father, and the Spirit no less than either. Man stands in a true interior relation to God, because the Son, the perfect revelation of the Father, is he through whom man is created and who unites creation with the Father. The Fathers unanimously teach that there is the most intimate union between God and redeemed and sanctified mankind, because the Spirit who has been shared with them is one and inseparable from the Father and the Son.

> The redeemed thus live truly in God, God is infinitely close to us, he is in us. In the Spirit of God, we cry out, "Abba, Father!" We do not know for what we should pray, but the Spirit cries out, as Saint Paul says, in unspeakable groanings within us. What union with God can be closer, can be more joyous, can be more consoling?[1]

This seems to be the rhetorically expressed ecclesiology of Einheit with its emphasis on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but with the careful superposition of the circumincession of the immanent Trinity. Then Möhler adds, however:

> But nevertheless God is not us. He has made the whole world for us; the Son, and this is one of the most important points stressed by Athanasius, the Son, through whom the Father has fashioned everything, is different

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[1] Ibid., pp. 289f.

> from everything, *of a different nature*; the Spirit, likewise. And if many Fathers said that the latter is essentially within us, it means nothing other than that *he himself* works in us, *that we receive him with freedom, that we could again drive him out through sin committed with freedom*. He is thus different from us although everything good in us is from him, through him, and in him.[1]

This is precisely the interpretation of the statement that "the Spirit is present *ousiōdōs* in believers" which Möhler had rejected in the first appendix to *Einheit*. There he had denied that the activity of God upon another, i.e., the God-world relation, can be thought of in the same way as finite causality. A finite cause always exists outside its effect. Not so the divine causality. "Where [God] works, necessarily he is himself, and what is has its existence only in so far as it is grounded in God."[2] This panentheist understanding of the God-world relation presents too many problems for Möhler now. It stands, as he had seen clearly in his grappling with Schleiermacher, dangerously close to the collapse of God and the world into one another. To say that the Spirit is "essentially" present within man, that the divine activity is "essentially" at work in the human pole of the relation, is not to deny the *relation*, which requires two distinct poles. Now the notion of "essential" presence is understood as an affirmation that it is indeed *God* who is active. In 1825, Möhler had written that "the life of the saints derives its innermost existence and nature not in relation to God yet outside him, but rather because of and in God."[1] In 1827, it was a relation to God, expressive of God, yet in which God remained "different from us" which he sought. In Einheit, the panentheist relation of creator to creation had provided the pattern for the relation of Spirit to Church. Because of the instability of panentheism, a new pattern had now to be found, one based on a God-man relation in which the poles are inseparable but unconfused, united but preserved in their distinctive integrity.

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[1] Ibid., p. 290.

[2] Möhler, *Einheit*, p. 243.

Although he had tried to distinguish clearly between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the Christian community in Einheit, Möhler had inevitably, working on his panentheist foundation, ended up with the Gemeingeist as the only necessary Spirit, the transcendent Spirit being arbitrarily posited behind it. He specifically cites that unavoidable conclusion as a dangerous result of Sabellianism, which is now equivalent to the panentheism of Schleiermacher.

> The Church has always been highly esteemed by Catholics precisely because it is the dwelling place of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, the creation of the Son who remains with it and in it even to the end of the world. But that it should ever have so totally misprized itself as must prove the case according to the Sabellian theory is quite beyond possibility. We shall forever maintain--and only were the Church itself totally abolished would this claim cease--that the spirit of the whole community, its common mind, its

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[1] Ibid.

> common spirit, all its truth, and everything of value which it possesses is the action of the Holy Spirit within it. But never will [the Church] proclaim that the spirit of the whole community is itself the Holy Spirit, itself the divine presence. The Church has never found itself in the curiously contradictory position of mistaking the Holy Spirit for the communal spirit or the communal sense (as has sometimes been said along the lines of Sabellianism), while simultaneously permitting that communal spirit to be transgressed in that a member of the Church would affirm that which is contrary to the constant steadfast common sense of the faithful, thus maintaining precisely what he denies. Never has the communal sense constantly at work in the Church with the Holy Spirit claimed to be the Holy Spirit. Else would the communal sense not dissolve, would it not negate itself, while trying to exalt itself?[1]

The mention of the Gemeingeist together with the repeated mention of the Gemeingefühl in the context of the argument that the identification of either with the Spirit of God ends in self-contradiction is a close parallel with the end of the first appendix to Einheit. Two new elements should be noted, however, in this paragraph: Gemeingeist and Gemeingefühl are called "Sabellian" expressions for the Holy Spirit, and the Church, while described as "filled by the Holy Spirit," is "the creation of the Son," and it is he whose continuing presence within it is stressed. The connection of the Son with the Church is an indication of the new direction that Möhler's ecclesiological thinking will take. The dangerous instability of panentheism as a way of formulating the God-man relation, its tendency to slip into pantheism, has become clear through the critique of Schleiermacher. The new pattern for that relation, and so for the interplay of the divine and the human in the Church, has already suggested itself. In calling for a formula which would unite the infinite and finite without confusion of one with the other, Möhler writes:

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, pp. 290f.

> This holds also for the Son, even though Athanasius and, following his lead, many other Fathers of the Church, looked upon him, after he became our redeemer, as the unity of all the faithful; for he is different from us who are divinized in him, to the degree that not even the humanity assumed by him, with which he united himself into one person, became of one nature with him and dissolved in him, but remained forever distinct.[1]

The classic Christological formula, one person and two natures, forever united but never confused, answers the need for a new pattern of the God-world relation. Möhler specifically notes that God and man are kept clearly distinguished even though Christ is called "the unity of all the faithful." Here is a principle of unity for the Church which avoids the divinization of the community, the result of basing an ecclesiology on a panentheist model which ends by deifying the human pole of the God-man relation.

Möhler ends his digression on Schleiermacher-Sabellius with the ecclesiological problem expressed in terms of Arianism and Sabellianism.

> According to the Arian teaching on the Trinity, no Church would have come into being at all, because it would have had to do so in a purely mechanical fashion, merely through teaching, through which nothing vital is ever born. According to the Sabellian, it would have

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[1] Ibid.

> destroyed itself in a worse delirium.[1]

This is the dichotomy of the two ecclesiologies of his canon law lectures and his occasional pieces from 1823-24 raised to a far higher degree of clarity. The mechanical, anthropocentric theory of the Church had never been a satisfactory option for Möhler. In Einheit he had attempted a nunaced and elaborate working-out of a theocentric, more specifically pneumatocentric, Church. He had come to see that, for all its brilliance and warmth, that way of establishing the Christian life as an ecclesial life foundered on an unstable God-man relation. If the first ecclesiological direction reduced the divine element in the Church to its intial founding and then left it to men to construct and govern the community, the second was in grave danger of reducing the human component to nothing more than the raw material for divine activity and of deifying the Church.

The Christological pattern as a way of understanding the divine-human relation and so as an approach to ecclesiology was exemplified for Möhler by Athanasius himself. In detailing Athanasian trinitarian theology, Möhler writes of the centrality of Christ's full humanity and full divinity for the mystery of salvation.

> In this way Athanasius views Christ as beyond question the representative of redeemed mankind, but, not just

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[1] Ibid., p. 291.

> as the representative, I must add. The entire Church is in him, in his power; he is the point of origin, and as in the origin everything is contained, so the entire Church is in him. If no objection is made to the expression, which can be grossly misunderstood, the Church is, as it were, the development of Christ in time.[1]

This is the first statement in Möhler's work of the ecclesiological principle which lies at the center of his treatment of the Church in Symbolik: the Church is the expansion of the divine-human relationship established in Christ. The principle is treated with caution, for it is open to being "grossly misunderstood." Möhler does not expand on that possibility, but considering the context of his statement, placed in a lengthy discussion of the dangers of Arianism on the one hand and Sabellianism on the other, one can discern its nature. Arianism represented for Möhler the separation of God from the world, the elimination of the divine in Christ and his reduction to the level of a creature, however exalted, and an ecclesiology which turned the Church into a society for the inculcation of moral precepts. Sabellianism, by contrast, collapsed God and the world together, swallowed up the humanity of Christ in the divinity, and deified the Church. The idea that the Church is the extension in space and time of the God-man relationship established in Christ has unfortunate consequences if that relationship is misunderstood. The divine and human must not be separated as in Arianism-deism or confused as in Sabellianism-Schleiermacherian panentheism.

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[1] Ibid., p. 266.

By maintaining the immanent Trinity, the economic Trinity is preserved as true relatedness. Only by rooting the God-world relation in the Godhead, by affirming it to be the external expression of an immanent relation within God, could the divine-human polarity be a relation, not an identity. The transcendence of God to his creation was necessary for the integrity of man in the relation. Einheit had built a theology of the Church on man in God; Symbolik's ecclesiology would be built on man before God.

First attempt at a new formula for the God-world Relationship: "Anselm," 1827-28

That growing concern for human integrity in the God-world relation was evidenced later the same year. In the third issue of the Theologische Quartalschrift for 1827 Möhler published the first installment of the first part of his study of Anselm of Canterbury, the second installment following in the next issue; the entire second part was printed in the first issue of 1828.[1] The first part dealt with Anselm's career and his relation to his time; the second dealt with his thought. Throughout this extremely perceptive essay, Möhler's respect for scholastic theology is apparent. As Einheit was the fruit of Möhler's discovery of the Fathers, so "Anselm" is the result of his newly-kindled love of the middle ages. To a degree, that new-found respect is directed toward a medieval world filtered through nineteenth-century romantic spectacles, as Drey's had been in his defense of scholastic theology in 1812. But Möhler was a better historian than his teacher, and his essay is a more considered, if no less favorable, investigation.

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[1] "Anselm, Erzbischof von Canterbury. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des religiös-sittlichen, öffentlich-kirchlichen und wissenschaftlichen Lebens im elften und zwölften Jahrhundert," Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 435-497, 585-664, entitled "Anselm als Erzbischof von Canterbury," and 10 (1828): 62-130, entitled "Die Scholastik des Anselmus"; both parts were reprinted in Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:32-176.

In Athanasius der Grosse, Möhler's thought on the Church had begun to center on Christ rather than the Spirit. Thus man as redeemed and sanctified is understood in relation to the incarnate Son. But, in accord with the thought of his fourth-century subject, Möhler wrote of man as created in the image of God. Not only as redeemed and sanctified, but as created, man is seen in connection with the second person of the Trinity.

> The first man was created by God in his image. The image of God is the Logos; in this [creation] he takes part. Man is thus a copy of the Logos, and as the fullness of divinity is in the Logos, he consequently sees in the Logos God himself. Apart from this image of the divine Logos in man, man is mortal; through this image in him, through his rational spiritual nature, immortal. If man preserves it in its purity, he lives the blessed, eternal and true life. To know himself immortal, good, and blessed, and to be conscious of God, are one and the same.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, pp. 123f.

This understanding of man as the image of the Logos undergoes an important development in "Anselm," a development based on a distinction which Möhler employs again in Symbolik. There he contrasts "image" and "likeness," following the example of "Catholic theologians," although his reference is to Bellarmine alone. The latter is quoted:

> Image, which is the actual nature of mind and will, could be created by God alone; likeness, however, which consists in virtue and justice, is perfected by us, with the assistance of God.[1]

Möhler refers to "image" as "the religious capacity," and "likeness" as "the development of the same, which is pleasing to God." He recognized that this was a highly contrived exegesis of Genesis 1, 26, but "the distinction has a value in itself independent of all biblical exegesis." These notions of the capacity for religious truth, which is equated with Bellarmine's reference to rationality, and of the development or activation of that capacity are the foundation for what Möhler praises as Anselm's greatest achievement, the recognition of "the objective unity of revealed doctrines with truths to be developed from reason."[2] The rational faculty of man is the image of the divine Logos. In self-consciousness man becomes conscious of God. But that consciousness of the divine which accompanies true self-consciousness is a transcendental principle. Man does not become aware of God as a datum of self-consciousness, still less as a deduction from the immediate datum. Rather, the consciousness of God is the directedness of consciousness, a background and support implicit in man's self-consciousness. The explicitation and interpretation of that transcendental principle of self-consciousness is a process of development in which both human and divine participation are required. God-consciousness, the transcendental element within and beneath self-consciousness, is a given; here man stands in absolute dependence upon God. This is to be in the image of God. Man was made, originally, in the likeness of God as well. That is, man was created with that "religious capacity" explicit and fulfilled.[1] Fallen man was deprived of the supernatural assistance necessary to develop that capacity; he was no longer in God's likeness, although God's image, however implicit and obscured, remained. With God's assistance, man's nature, i.e., God's image, can be developed and perfected, i.e., brought into likeness to God, by man's efforts. That necessary supportive divine activity is grace, which, when directed to the intellect, is revelation. Grace does not violate nature, it enables nature to be what it should be; revelation does not contradict reason, it supports reason's growth to full self-consciousness, and so full God-consciousness. Integral humanity, full rationality is a process. That tendency to reunderstand terms previously considered in Catholic theology to be static moments as instead dynamic developments is typical of Möhler and the Tübingen school. It will be seen to be of great importance in Symbolik.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:66, n. 4; the quotation is from De gratia primi hominis, c. 11.

[2] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:139.

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[1] In Symbolik, Möhler dealt with the distinction between imago Dei and similitudo in order to discuss the relationship between nature and grace, 1:61-63. In "Anselm" he is concerned with the question of reason's relation to revelation. The distinction functions in exactly the same way with either set of terms.

Revelation summons forth and supports rationality in its development. The divine pole of the God-man relation having constituted the human pole as capable of being related, now leads it to an active grasp of that relatedness.

> The sense of beauty would never develop without the external perception of beautiful objects, the laws of nature implicit in the human spirit would never come to consciousness, if nature did not present itself as something given: although he bears it dormant within him, man would never learn what love is, without objects which excite it. So innate rationality remains buried within itself if reason does not enliven it.[1]

Man's rational nature goes undeveloped until reason summons it forth. Man discovers himself to be open to reason because that which embodies reason is presented to him. In self-consciousness the human being grasps himself as open, as capable of being filled; that self-consciousness is in fact awakened when that which can fill us presents itself to us. It is as if man does not recognize how hungry he is until food is placed before him.

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:139.

Human rationality is uncovered in its deepest recesses and its widest expanse when it is confronted by the Logos, ultimate reason and ultimate given, because ultimate revelation. Since the Logos is the fullness of the Godhead, as it was stressed in Athanasius that each inner-trinitarian person is the fullness of divinity, the discovery that man is a "copy of the Logos" means that there is a trinitarian impress upon the human being.

> Meanwhile, in order to comprehend the connection of Anselm's principles, it must be stated as a corollary of a deeper view of the foregoing that he has understood the Trinity as the self-consciousness, the intelligence, and the love of the divine nature. In his self-consciousness, his intelligence and love, the prior of Bec now notes, man recognizes himself as the image of God, or what is truer, he is God's image only because he is conscious of God, knows him, and loves him. The highest vocation of man, indeed the nature of man, is thus to love God, which he cannot do without being conscious of God and knowing him. To perfect this Trinity within him must consequently be the loftiest striving of man.[1]

As the immanent Trinity had functioned as a way of affirming both the transcendence of God and his real relatedness to creation, it now serves, when united with this classical "image" anthropology, as a way of guaranteeing man's relatedness to God in absolute receptivity and his freedom. Man is not an organ of the divine; he is an integral but finite being ordered to the divine by the fact that he is an image of the divine. "This conception of man and his vocation is the most profound and, in truth, most speculative which is possible," Möhler judges. It integrates man. His relation to God is not only through self-consciousness, although the presence of the divine as transcendental principle is the implicit foundation of all consciousness, but through knowing and willing as well. All three faculties are part of man's fundamental nature, his being-image.

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[1] Ibid., 1:136.

> God, who knows himself, and, because he knows himself, knows and loves everything because everything is in him, created man in his own image, whose nature it is thus also to know himself and through this to know and love in general, which, since God, who is all in all, has imaged himself forth in him, is likewise to be conscious of God, to know him, and to love him. These intensely serious considerations contain at the same time the truest and most penetrating challenge to strive to think and know, since man bears the impression of absolute knowing, and knowledge is a part of the human being, and all true knowledge is knowing God.[1]

Self-consciousness expresses itself in knowing and loving, each of which spurs the other on. In their unfolding activity self-consciousness becomes clearer, deeper, and richer and, in its unfolding its directedness, the transcendent orientation of the whole finite being, becomes more explicit, and so better able to be known and willed in love. It is an organic process, the unfolding from within which is a pattern of thought familiar to Möhler. But the organism needs to be fed from the outside; it requires external stimulation. The implicit directedness of human reason is not uncovered, not stirred into fruitful growth, without revelation.

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[1] Ibid.

> This rational nature which has been described, this spiritual life of man, is nevertheless given to him only as a seed closed in upon itself (the innate idea), which should be opened up through free self-determination and cultivated to maturity. This image impressed on man as a purely natural disposition should be refined into his free self-conscious possession. Just as Anselm saw that man's rationality must have a history, because the impression has to be brought to self-conscious expression, so too the conditions did not escape him under which this is uniquely possible. It was clear to him that man could recognize God only in God, that divine truth stoops to human need so that in it and with it man perceives the true. It was equally evident to him that divine truth must come from without as doctrine and instruction to meet man as finite being if the disposition is to unfold itself into rationality, into self-conscious maturity. This divine truth being offered from without must be grasped through faith which is accordingly for Anselm the second prerequisite that the rational capacity emerge out of itself and come to knowledge.[1]

In Einheit in der Kirche, man's "longing" for God is uncovered by revelation. On the level common to all humanity revelation is the universe, "the whole" in which alone God has wholly revealed himself.[2] Creation is the revelation of the Creator for one who experiences his oneness with the whole of creation. On the specifically Christian level, revelation is the community of believers living in love the life of the Spirit of God. The Church is the new creation revealing the "new creator," Christ, to the believer who experiences his oneness with the whole community of the faithful.[1] In the panentheist perspective of Einheit in der Kirche, the revelatory power of the universe, the community of existence, and the Church, the community of belief, was grasped by man when he "expanded" himself to grasp them in their totality, to discover his insertion into them, to experience their life as his. The emphasis is placed on man's unity with God's revelation, his participation in the expressions of that revelation, the interiority of that revelation to man.

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[1] Ibid., 1:137.

[2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

A decidedly different emphasis is found now in "Anselm." No longer is man's union with revelation, its interiority, that which is the effective power of the revelation. Rather, it is the exteriority of revelation which is the crucial factor. What is interior to man is his capacity for God, his radical openness to the divine. But that can only be stimulated by his confrontation with that which would fill him. It might be argued that the fact that in Einheit in der Kirche Möhler wrote of the individual's having to expand himself, his having to stretch himself to the measurements of the universe and of the Church, indicates that initially man is confronted with revelation, that it is external to him, that in himself he finds only his "longing." But in Einheit, Möhler describes that expansion, that interiorizing of revelation, as the precondition for the revelatory force to uncover God for man. In "Anselm," it is the confrontation between man and external revelation which awakens in man the receptivity for the divine, and man's long process of growth to the stature of the revelation is never complete. For the Möhler of 1825, universe and Church could be revelatory only by uniting God and man. For the universe is that in which God "wholly" reveals himself, it is co-extensive with God's activity, although not identical with it[1] (a distinction which may be easily affirmed but maintained only with difficulty, as Möhler had shown in his critique of panentheism in Athanasius). God's expression of himself, his "whole" expression, is the universe to whose measure man expands himself and which he grasps "in love." Man's oneness with the universe is functionally his union with God. The same holds true on the specifically Christian plane: since the Church is co-extensive with the activity of Christ, the Christian's oneness with the communal life of all believers is functionally his union with Christ. For the Möhler of 1828, however, revelation is not a matter of union between God and man, rather it is precisely because God and man stand over against one another that revelation is required. Revelation is required because there is a relationship between God and man, not simple identity or even functional identity, the danger of panentheism. The ability to perceive revelation, whether primary, i.e., creation, or secondary, i.e., incarnation and Church, as indeed the revelation of God is rooted in man's being-image, which is itself the work of God. That perception and the defining, clarifying, explicitating effect it has upon the "religious capacity," the growth from implicit "image" to explicit "likeness," is, as Möhler writes, a history. It is an interplay of the internal and external, both of which are necessary, both of which are divinely initiated and supported, while the history yet remains a human history. Man remains related in complete dependence upon God, but truly related, not absorbed.

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[1] Ibid., p. 100.

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[1] Ibid., p. 98.

Revelation coming from without must be grasped by faith. Then it can begin to give explicit shape to that implicit religious capacity. The innate image of God begins to be refined. The question may well be posed whether this means that Möhler thinks that faith is necessary for the human being to be fully human. He does observe "that Anselm was convinced that whoever does not believe also does not attain to fully mature spiritual life, to full developed rationality."[1] Does this not undercut his concern for the integrity of the human? Is the nonbeliever a less developed human being that the believer? On the other side of the divine-human polarity, is the freedom of God violated, the gratuity of his revelation and grace, his self-imparting, denied, if he is envisioned as creating man dependent upon divine self-communication in order to be an integral creature? If man is created in such a way that he demands God's self-communication in revelation and grace in order to be himself, is not his creator obliged in justice to yield that communion? These questions are not explicitly addressed in "Anselm." Möhler's thought, never complete, never satisfied, always probing, moved further along lines suggested by these problems in the various editions of Symbolik. But pertinent reflections are to be found in his study of the eleventh-century doctor.

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:138.

The first human being was created in God's image and likeness. That datum of Genesis, understood in terms of capacity and its development, means that for man prior to the fall the capacity could be distinguished only by way of mental abstraction from its progressive fulfillment and consequently the conditions necessary for it. Man was thus created with natural receptivity for divine self-communication and in the conditions through which that divine self-communication was actualized. The fall of man, humanity's primal sin, did not obliterate God's image; the religious capacity was still present. But the conditions necessary for its gradual perfection, the divine gift which is interiorly grace and exteriorly revelation, were removed. Image could never become likeness, rationality could never develop. Man retains a capacity for God, but that capacity can not be activated. Even if revelation were grasped by man's Verstand, it would not awaken his Vernunft; it would remain merely conceptual, dead, incapable of moving man to activity, to love, to growth toward the revealer.

> Love can be attained only in hope and in faith. To believe in God means to strive toward the highest being. Faith is dead if it is not active and alive through love. Dead faith is essentially different from living: dead faith merely grasps what should be believed; living [faith] assumes it into itself (Credere quod credi debet; credere in id, quod credi debet). Without love there is thus no true faith; the latter must exercise itself in the former's works.[1]

The redeemed and justified man is given that interior communication of God, grace, which allows Vernunft, the image of God, to respond and to develop to full rationality, to become "like" God, to love. What is of particular importance to note is that man is never out of relation to God. The divine-human relationship undergoes change, but is never broken. Man is both integral and related at all times. There is no "natural man," however, except by way of abstraction, if that term means man apart from the God-man relation. There is man capable of communion with God and in communion, man capable of communion with God but out of communion, and man capable of communion with God and restored to that communion, but there is never man quite apart from God.

Consequently, although Möhler does not take up in "Anselm" the questions we have posed, an indication can be found of the direction in which he will move on them.

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[1] Ibid., 1:162f.

When he affirms that man without faith, "does not attain to . . . fully developed rationality," the term "man without faith" should not be equated with "natural man," but with "fallen man"; the former is an abstraction, the latter a state of existence.

How does this advance our understanding of Möhler's shift in ecclesiology as he moves from Einheit in der Kirche to Symbolik? Through the critique of panentheism which had enabled him to distance himself from Schleiermacher, Möhler had observed the danger, implicit in the panentheist way of formulating the relationship between God and finite existents, of deifying the Church and effectively negating the human within the *ecclesia*. He had begun to employ the "inseparable but unconfused" pattern of classical Christology as a way of working out the divine and human components within the Church. That ecclesiological pattern is buttressed through the anthropology of "Anselm."

In Search of an Ecclesiology

Reference has been made to the shift in emphasis between the God-man relation as union both in regard to grace and revelation, the panentheist approach, and that relation as "confrontation," again in both its subjective (grace) and objective (revelation) dimensions. This shift has a pronounced effect on the understanding of the relationship within the Church, as "the development of Christ in time,"[1] between the divine life of the Son and the community of believers. Möhler has written in Athanasius that in Christ the divine and human remain eternally distinct; the humanity is not swallowed up in the divinity.[2] The "development" of that union of divine and human with both remaining distinct throughout time in the Church means that the communal life of the faithful cannot be identified with the divine life. The Gemeingeist of the faithful remains a human spirit which is the creation of the Son through his Spirit in response to his self-gift. The community of the faithful at any given moment is the humanity of Christ, united to his divinity, but not his divinity. It expresses the divinity in a human way, because it is the visible effect of the divine Spirit. But, as Möhler pointed out in correcting his earlier interpretation of the patristic sources in Einheit, to say that God works in and through something is not to say that he is essentially present in and through that thing.[3] The humanity of Christ remained created, finite and in need of redemption even in hypostatic union with the Son. So, too, the human Gemeingeist of the Church remains finite; it grows, changes and develops according to human laws. While truly united with the divine, the Church is not exempt from the laws governing human history. As a human community it experiences within itself the dynamics at work in all human communities. As united to but distinct from the divine, the community of believers is "confronted" with grace and revelation, as well as embodying grace and revelation. Consequently the Church's teaching office, while being the expression of the Gemeingeist of the Church, the expression of the divinely-worked unity of believers, is also the expression of revelation which always encounters the community as something beyond it. The teaching office is the expression of the Church's self-consciousness. But what it discovers in that self-consciousness is the directedness toward the divine which is forever united with it, present to it, but demanding its growth.

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 266.

[2] Ibid., p. 290.

[3] Ibid.

Thus the visible structure of ecclesiastical office and the teaching authority joined with it cannot any longer be explained solely as an evolutionary expression of the loving communion of the faithful reaching ever greater unity and concretion. Such a view had ultimately rested on the understanding of revelation as union. Now Möhler is forced to an understanding of magisterial authority (however specific expressions of that authority may have developed in accord with the dynamics of human societies) as speaking not only from the believing community but to it, giving voice not only to the present consciousness of the community but to the transcendent principle within that consciousness.

So, in Athanasius, when Möhler treats of a reply of Pope Julius in 340 to a synod held at Antioch, a reply in which the Roman bishop protested against decisions made before securing his assent, he comments:

> Here Julius asserts his rights of primacy. The pious, noble pope has usurped nothing for himself when he insisted that such important questions be referred to him and only then decided. For Socrates says, speaking of the synod of Antioch which once again deposed Athanasius: "Julius, the bishop of Rome, also was not present and no one represented him in his stead. A church canon, however, requires that the churches may enact no laws without the agreement of the Roman bishop."[1]

The fact that Socrates assertion of papal rights over local churches and local bishops is quoted approvingly, combined with the explicit statement that Julius's claim to be able to nullify decisions taken by episcopal meetings without his approval was within his rights, was not a "usurpation," is a much stronger statement of papal authority than has been found earlier in Möhler's writings. The question of Möhler's changing opinions on papal primacy and their approximation to the doctrine of papal infallibility enunciated in 1870 deserves a separate study. What is noteworthy at this point in an investigation of his ecclesiology is the implied change of direction in ecclesial authority. The form of ecclesiastical office may have developed in an ascending way, but the authority which those forms embody operates in a descending way. Möhler seems quite willing to agree with the claim implicit in Julius's letter and explicit in Socrates's treatment of it, that the pope may overrule a synod of bishops. No qualifications are placed by either Julius or Socrates or Möhler on the representative nature of such a synod: presumably the need for papal approval would be exactly the same whether it be in reference to the acts of a small and localized assembly or a gathering of all bishops but the Roman.

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[1] Ibid., p. 360.

The importance of Möhler's brief comments on this letter of Julius in response to the Antiochene synod is heightened when it is conjoined to his remarks a few pages later on the letter sent by the majority party at the council of Sardica to Pope Julius. That letter, Möhler writes, contains several points of particular note. After expressing confidence that Julius would be in agreement with the decisions reached, the bishops at Sardica affirmed their desire to be in accord with the see of Peter. "This is very remarkable," Möhler notes.

> While the Arians had pursued their own interests against Athanasius in egoistic divisiveness and had constantly demanded that the universal Church should concur without conditions in the destructive course of one of its parts, rather than that the diseased part receive health from the whole, the synod of Sardica orders that the parts should always act in accord with the whole. But since the pope, to whom the dignity of Peter has been transmitted, is the head with which all the limbs stand in organic connection, so all activities of individual churches should proceed in agreement with him. As through the omnipotent power of the redeemer those separated become one, so in Arianism, which denied the divinity of the saviour, lay the seed of division, willfulness, and destruction as its whole history demonstrates.

> As the Catholic Church therefore combatted Arianism, so it was inherent in the nature of the case that, through a mysterious inner call, it likewise opposed itself to the latter's separatist tendency and consequently stressed, together with the invisible center and head of the Church, the visible center and visible head. In support of Athanasius, the representative of the Catholic Church in the battle for the divinity of the redeemer, it was forcibly directed to the visible head of the Church. So everything was interrelated and the one conditioned the other. Those who defended the dignity of the invisible head held fast to the visible head and were defended by him; in this way they were returned to their churches in order to be able again to defend the invisible head. Thus, the history of Athanasius became a very noteworthy point for the history of the primacy, and in this respect as well its effects stretched far into the future.[1]

Two elements should be noted in this paragraph. First, the papal office is treated not simply as a progressive development of the believing community's mutual love, although that is not denied by any means, but as a given, as something built into the very structure of the community. Second, and in further support of the first, the papal office is put into a Christological context, as is the Church. Those who defend the divinity of Christ defend the primacy of the bishop of Rome. The Church is the extension of Christ; within it the divine and the human are related, as in Christ, inseparably but unconfusedly. The human community of the Church grows in the same way as any human community, and so develops out of itself the forms and offices of leadership and service needed to maintain the unity and purpose of any human community. But the authority expressed in those forms and offices, in the Church's case, does not arise out of the community. It is a given, just as the divine in Christ did not emerge from the humanity with which it was united and which, in expressing the divine, grew and developed in accord with its humanity. The papacy as a form of authority is a human historical development, and so speaks _for_ the Church. The authority which has been embodied in it, however, is divinely given and so speaks _to_ the Church. If this is true of the papal office, it is true of all ecclesial office. This is the new direction of Möhler's thought on magisterial office and authority. Its development is due not simply to the historical instances which he observed in the fourth-century battle with Arianism or in the Hildebrandine reforms of the eleventh century of which he writes in the first part of "Anselm"; certainly these "case histories: had an effect on his thinking. But it is of importance that these instances fall into accord with the ecclesiological patterns being established during these years by his attempts at a new formulation of the God-man relationship.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 366f.

The divine must always confront, must always stand over against, must always be related to, not identical with, the human. Thus the teaching office must always speak to the Church as authority even while it is part of the Church as a form of that authority. In "Anselm," Möhler writes that "in some instances the Gospel bases all true acts of will on true knowledge, and in other instances bases the latter on the former, i.e., both, as constituting one and the same spiritual life, mutually condition one another."[1] To know the truth, one must will the good, and vice versa. Thus, before one can grasp and maintain revelation in its fullness, one must love the revealer perfectly. Perfect intellectual formation in accord with revelation is one with the perfectly engraced, sinless life. Revelation and grace are the external and internal forms of God's self-communication. Thus man, always in process of sanctification, is always in process of grasping revealed truth. "It should be imagined that Adam, in the same instant that _he no longer wanted what he knew, also no longer knew what he wanted_." Just as perfect holiness always stands just outside man's grasp, leading him forward, so also does perfect knowledge. As grace always comes to man, in or out of the Church, as a given, so also does truth.

> But the Gospel, this holy work of God, not of man, has always run the danger of being denigrated to the imperfect knowledge of men instead of man's letting himself be raised to its height and majesty. In opposition to this endeavor, the most perceptive men of all Christian ages have recognized that the Gospel has objectified itself in the Church, in that vain or arrogant subjectivity must measure itself against the most unyielding objectivity, and must extend itself up to and into this fixed point, rather than substituting itself, wearied with the burdensome task or not acknowledging its own imperfection, for the objective, and rather than dragging the objective down to itself and confining the growth process to the life-stage of the

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[1] Möhler, _Gesammelte Schriften_, 1:134.

> embryo. Only so, they were convinced, could the historical, objective Christ be maintained with all definiteness and strength, when he, alive in the Church, proclaims in the face of any attempted misrepresentation, "This I am not."[1]

The power and authority of Christ is objective in the Church; it is not encountered by the members of the Church as their power and authority. It does not come from them but to them. Were it theirs, it would stand in danger of distortion through the sinfulness of the members, their weakness and selfishness. The Church proclaims what is present in it and to it, but does not belong to it or arise out of it. The divine confronts the human which expresses it, as the divine in Christ is forever joined to but never identical with the human in him.

A second example of the practical ecclesiological consequences of Möhler's changed understanding of the divine-human polarity, in addition to the beginnings of a new view of ecclesiastical office and magisterium, is the emergence of a new direction in his treatment of Church-state, or better, Church-world, relations. Certainly there are few episodes in the history of the Church so exactly geared to lead one to the recognition of the dangers of Erastianism as the conflicts between the Athanasian party and Constantius. It might, therefore, be expected that his study of the trials and tribulations of Athanasius and his supporters would produce a change in Möhler's views on Church-state relations.

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[1] Ibid., 1:142.

His earlier "Josephinist" tendencies, his willingness to submit the Church to the control of the state in so many areas, do indeed begin to alter. But, as with the gradual shift in his attitude toward magisterium, the change was caused not only by his investigation of particular historical cases, but much more as a consequence of the new way of relating God and man. This changed approach to Church-state questions is, like his treatment of Church office, in need of separate study and is used here only as an indication of the development taking place in his thought during these years between _Einheit in der Kirche_ and _Symbolik_ and culminating in the various editions of the latter. That this change in regard to the position of Church and state was not an easy one for him is evidence by a comment in _Athanasius_.

In the fifth book of his study of the fourth-century battle with Arianism, Möhler recounts at length the reverses wreaked on the orthodox party by the opposition of the emperor Constantius. He translates almost all of the letter of Ossius of Cordova to Constantius as it is preserved by Athanasius[1] with its strong statement of the mutual independence of Church and state. In the summary table of contents these pages are described as "Great truths which were spoken to the emperor on the independence of the Church from the State."[1] And yet, when Möhler comments on Hilary of Poitier's attack on Constantius, he writes:

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[1] Möhler, _Athanasius_, pp. 418-420; the original is in _Historia Arianorum ad monachos_, c. 44.

> But one is horrified in reading this passage. I say this not so much because the plight of the Church appears before us so vividly in this description of the emperor, or because the state of the Church was so wretched that a man of such sensitive and peaceful disposition as Hilary could flame into such a passion, as because the subject writes in such fashion against his prince. But if one drives men to despair, one must be prepared to hear the language of despair.[2]

The great respect for secular authority which is apparent in his early Josephinist-Febronianist views is still clear. The passionate rhetoric of fourth-century doctrinal disputes alarms nineteenth-century theological ears when it is turned against the state.

But the alteration in his opinions continues. The entire first part of his study of Saint Anselm, published the same year as Athanasius der Grosse, centers on the theme of the freedom of the Church as a separate community from that of the state. The investiture controversy is set in a far wider context. Möhler describes the eleventh century as a time when the spirit of men was in a turmoil of growth. "The chains in which the spirit was bound" were broken; "the religious flame longed for freedom." But the individual could not be free in his religious development if the whole of which he is a part is not free. "If the whole is a slave, then the individual can not be a free man." Thus the investiture controversy was part and parcel of the drive to free the Church, which was itself the longing of man to be free to respond to God. "The Church which Christ has purchased with his blood and made free cannot be the handmaid of the state."[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. XIII.

[2] Ibid., p. 507.

As both the divine and human must be preserved in their integrity while their relatedness is affirmed, so also the Church and the state must be recognized as mutually independent yet related. That discovery had been made by the pre-Constantinian Church in its rejection by the state. In 1823, Möhler had described the life of the Church of the first three centuries in idyllic terms, as a golden age. Persecution had forced it to rely upon itself and to discover within itself the life of the Spirit, which had begun to freeze into deadening institutionalization during the seemingly triumphant ensuing centuries.[2] By 1827 that view had altered. The first three Christian centuries are still depicted as a time when the Church learned self-reliance, but that lesson was in preparation for what followed.

> It should learn to live its own proper life and to trust itself; all its forms should be developed out of its own nature, which are the most suited to it, which are necessary for it to progress always to happier, freer, nobler independence and in its distinctness from the state to give an eternal testimony of its superior value, of its immediate divine origin, of the difference between the

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:34-35.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 5 (1823): 485-486.

> eternal and the temporal, in that never again would the former be obscured and held captive by the latter. This opposition of the eternal to the temporal is represented in the difference and in the oppositions between Church and state; in the pre-Christian period, God and world, spirit and body, and so, necessarily, state and Church, dissolved into one another. The spiritual and eternal was not acknowledged in its freedom and priority. To bring it to its acknowledgement required a difficult three hundred year-long battle, one, however, which will never wholly cease.[1]

That ceaseless battle requires the Church always to assert its independence of secular control as Athanasius did in the fourth century and Anselm did in the eleventh. But just as the transcendence of God guarantees the freedom and integrity of man in the divine-human polarity, so the independence of the Church also asserts the validity of the state. The confusion of Church and state is destructive of both.

> Of course, in the end, the divinization of nature turned into its complete devaluation; it was viewed as a work of chance and misused purely for the satisfaction of sensual desires and needs. In the same way this happened finally to the state, likewise because of its divinization. When the Roman emperors let themselves be deified as the representatives of the state and its divinization, there came the severing of all civil ties; each one saw in the state only himself and used it as means to his own ends. Civil wars broke out; the state lost all value and seemed the work of chance. Accordingly the state must always respect the independent dignity of the Church so that its own dignity may be respected. Both, therefore, must be maintained apart from one another and each of these institutions must be free and independent in itself.[2]

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[1] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 199.

[2] Ibid., pp. 200f.

But, as in the divine-human relation, the integrity and independent value of both Church and state are nevertheless related to one another.

> As between the eternal and the temporal, between the spiritual and corporal, there are no absolute oppositions, so too there is no absolute opposition between state and Church. Rather the eternal manifests itself in the temporal, the supersensible in the sensible, and the latter becomes the substratum for the former. And so, after the power of the new spirit had secured the recognition of its dignity and independence through the three hundred year-long struggle, the goal had now been reached. Now there must begin a bond of friendship. As the general revelation of God in the world, and the special revelation in Christianity are not contradictory, but instead the former is brought to recognition by the latter, so also the immediate foundation of the Church by God and the mediate institution of the state by God are not contradictory; rather the former brings the latter to recognition and demonstrates its value. Only the divinization of the state, like that of the world in paganism, must cease. Accordingly the higher unity between state and Church lies in the fact that both are institutions of God.[1]

Thus, Möhler's new formulation of the God-man relation which leads him to a new understanding of the relationship of the divine and the human elements within the Church is reflected in a new approach to Church-state questions. That new approach is not complete; it does not resolve all the necessary questions, e.g., while grounding the mutual independence, integrity and relatedness of the sacred and secular communities, Möhler does not specifically address himself to the difficulties arising from the fact that the same individual is a member of both, that therefore the two communities are not only related, but overlapping. That, however, is true of Möhler's whole understaking during these years. The year 1825 had marked the first breakthrough moment for the Tübingen theologian, the first stage at which to summarize and order his work to that point; this he had done brilliantly and provocatively in *Einheit in der Kirche*. The next years were a period of self-criticism, of new insights, deepened perspectives and altering views. Such a time does not lend itself to completeness or orderly exposition. That opportunity came in the next period of his career, the years of the various reworkings of *Symbolik*.

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[1] Ibid.

In the years following his first book, Möhler's attention in ecclesiology shifted from the Spirit to Christ, as the principle of the Church. In *Athanasius der Grosse* the grounds for that changed perspective are worked out in terms of a response to Schleiermacher's defense of Sabellianism, which is a critique of the panentheist understanding of the God-man relationship which Möhler had shared with the Protestant writer. The new way of picturing that relationship must uphold the transcendence of God and the integrity of the finite, while still holding them in a relation in which the human pole remains utterly dependent. That relation is modeled upon the classical Chalcedonian Christology which affirms the fullness of Christ's divinity, the fullness of his humanity, their inseparability in his person, but their distinction one from the other. Möhler's interest has settled upon the human in that infinite-finite polarity as the key to understanding the Church. His rejection of panentheism does not lead him to reject the anthropological staring-point for the dogmatic enterprise. His fundamental problematic was that of German Catholicism in his time, the problematic which we have seen in Sailer's *Erlebnistheologie*. It is to root the doctrine of the Church in the experience of the human being. The answer of *Einheit in der Kirche*, brimming with romantic enthusiasm, had been that the individual's experience of community with mankind, his identity with it, is the revelation of his rootedness in God, and that his experience of the community of believers and his identity with it is the revelation of his being newly created, redeemed by Christ. Both of those experiences are based in God. The ecclesial experience, however, is shaped by the communal spirit which is the effect of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Christian *Gemeingeist* is the Spirit of God as experienced.

Because this answer stands in grave danger of swallowing the human into the divine, of incarnating the Spirit in a classically docetist fashion, Möhler seeks a different formulation. But this new model is also anthropologically based. For Möhler had discovered something very important about the patristic treatment of the divinity of Christ: the Fathers defended the reality of the divine presence in

Christ on the basis of man's need for redemption.[1] If Christ is the redeemer, then he is divine as well as human, for only the divine can save us. Man always possessed the image of God in which he had been created.[2] But that image had been emptied of content by the fall of man. Through sin the likeness of man to God was destroyed, and the divine image in humanity was reduced to nothing but a ceaseless restlessness, a longing for the something more which man was not always able even to name God.[3] Man could not fill that image; it was not his, although constitutive of his nature. The fulfillment of that image, leading it to become again the likeness of God, could only be the work of God.[4]

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[1] See ibid., pp. 140f. and the emphasis which Möhler places on this line of thought in Hilary's *De trinitate*, ibid., p. 468.

[2] Ibid., p. 140: "The Logos had never abandoned mankind. In itself, claims Athanasius, the grace of the image of God (in man) was sufficient to acknowledge God the Logos and through him the Father."

[3] Ibid., p. 141: "But a longing for redemption rose up from out the depths of the God-centered heart, Athanasius says elsewhere, and so breaks forth through all the depravity, and this precisely at the moment when the human race had sunk to the lowest point."

[4] Ibid., p. 142: "But man could not come to God through repentence. For could he participate in Being itself *and raise himself above his nature*? His restoration required the one who had created everything in the beginning, God the Logos. It was up to him to lead those wandering into non-being back to Being and to take our guilt upon himself, to annul the curse of the law and to turn once again the Father's countenance toward us" (emphasis original).

Möhler developed that anthropology of "image and likeness" further in "Anselm, Erzbischof von Canterbury," employing it as a basis for a theology of grace and revelation within the framework of this Christological divine-human relationship. The incarnation of the Son now occupied a very different position in that relationship. In Einheit in der Kirche, with its pneumatocentric ecclesiology, Christ's relationship to the believer was that of the sender of the Spirit. It was the latter through whom the believer was related to the divine. Now it is Christ upon whom the restoration of the relationship is entirely dependent. It is in the incarnate Son, in the relationship of the divine and the human in him, their inseparability and distinctness, that the God-man relation is perfected. That union is unsurpassable and unrepeatable. He is not only the beginning of that relationship, but "in the origin, everything is contained";[1] he is its beginning and its perfection. The Church is the development in time of the incarnation; it is the expansion to all human beings at all times in all places of that divine-human relation established in Christ, a relationship to which they are receptive because of the "image," the "religious capacity" within them, which can now, by the reestablishment of the communication of God to man, grow again to "likeness."

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[1] Ibid., p. 266.

Thus, the new ecclesiology is anthropologically grounded in the sense that the situation of man, created in God's image but having destroyed his likeness to God, i.e., open to divine self-communication both within (grace) and without (revelation), is the standpoint from which one may understand the incarnation, the perfect union but not identity of the divine and the human, and the Church, the extension and unfolding of the incarnation. The very last words in Athanasius der Grosse are Möhler's statement that "in every respect in which he is related to the Church, Christ is only understood as the unity of both [the divine and human natures], as the God-man."[1] Both must be maintained in relation but not identity. The mature expression of the new ecclesiological understanding toward which Möhler worked in the years after Einheit was given in Symbolik.

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[1] Ibid., p. 564.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTOCENTRIC ECCLESIOLOGY
OF JOHANN ADAM MÖHLER

VOLUME TWO

A DISSERTATION
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CHAPTER IV

NATURE AND SUPERNATURE: SYMBOLIK AND NEUE UNTERSUCHUNGEN, 1832-1838

Symbolik oder Darstellung der dogmatischen Gegensätze der Katholiken und Protestanten nach ihren öffentlichen Bekenntnisschriften[1] occupied the second half of Möhler's creative life. His first published work had appeared in 1823, *Einheit in der Kirche* in 1825, *Athanasius der Grosse* in 1827, "Anselm, Erzbischof von Canterbury" in 1827-28. From 1823 until 1830, eight articles (apart from the three installments of "Anselm") had appeared either in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* or in *Katholik*, and thirty-eight reviews, some of considerable length and great interest for tracing his developing opinions on several issues, all in the *Quartalschrift*.[2]

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[1] (Mainz, 1832). Four more editions, each altered and expanded, followed in Möhler's lifetime, although the revised fifth edition was incomplete at his death. As with *Einheit*, we stand indebted to J. R. Geiselmann for a superb critical edition of *Symbolik*, 2 vols. (Cologne: Jakob Hegner, 1958-1960); all references will be to this latter, unless otherwise noted.

[2] The extremely useful "Möhler-Bibliographie" based on the work of Stefan Lösch is found in "Verzeichnis der

In the summer semester of 1830, the Tübingen professor of Church history offered his first series of lectures in symbolics, the comparative study of the doctrinal positions of various Christian churches. Although from 1830 until his death eight years later, Möhler published another eight articles[1] and nineteen reviews, his attention was almost constantly focused on the various expanded editions of Symbolik or on Neue Untersuchungen der Lehrgegensätze zwischen den Katholiken und Protestanten. Eine Vertheidigung meiner Symbolik gegen die Kritik des Herrn Professors Dr. Baur in Tübingen,[2] which is itself a lengthy explanation and clarification of Symbolik.

During that period Möhler's theological thought continued to develop along many lines, including those that have interested us. The direction which his ecclesiology

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gedruckten Arbeiten Johann Adam Möhlers (1796-1838)," Kirche und Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert. Referate und Berichte des Arbeitskreises Katholische Theologie, ed. G. Schwaiger (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975), pp. 5*-71*.

[1] Of these eight essays written after 1830, one, "Über die Lehre Swedenborgs," Theologische Quartalschrift 12 (1830): 648-697, was incorporated into Symbolik, and another, "Betrachtungen über den Zustand der Kirche im 15. und zu Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts, in Bezug auf die behauptete Nothwendigkeit einer die bestehenden Grundlagen der Kirche verletzenden Reformation," Theologische Quartalschrift 13 (1831): 589-633, continued his concern with symbolics.

[2] (Mainz, 1834); 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (Mainz, 1835).

had begun to take in Athanasius found its final expression in Symbolik. The first edition of his great work on Catholic and Protestant dogmatics leads his theology of the Church to a position which protects the reality of the divine and the freedom and integrity of the human while holding them united in the community of the Church. As had been suggested by the study of Athanasius, this is accomplished by the shift from a pneumatocentric to a Christocentric ecclesiology. Once that position of tension and union had been achieved, Möhler was able to recover in the second edition several of the themes which had been so prominent in Einheit and so well served by its Spirit-based viewpoint, and to incorporate them into his new theology of the Church. The third and fourth editions left the sections on the Church unchanged, and Möhler died before his revisions in the fifth edition reached the ecclesiological sections of his book. Our attention then, when examining Möhler's treatment of the Church directly, must center on the first two editions of Symbolik.

Möhler's ecclesiology, however, is a function of his way of formulating the relationship between the infinite and the finite, the "God-man relation" as he termed it. Just before Einheit went to the publisher, he had added a new section, placing the understanding of the Church presented throughout the work on "an even deeper foundation," one which took into account "our [i.e., humanity's] whole situation."[1] That deeper foundation was a straightforward statement of the panentheist formulation of the God-man relation which underlay the whole ecclesiology. The movement from that ecclesiological position to the one set forth in Symbolik had been set in motion by the criticism of panentheism expressed in Athanasius. An indication of a new way of expressing the divine-human relationship had been found there as well, but the first full-blown attempt at such a formulation had been in "Anselm" with the distinction of imago and similitudo as its tool. Consequently, we must look to Symbolik for the continuing development of this new formulation, since it is this which underpins and illuminates the inner logic of the ecclesiology at which Möhler arrives. And so, before looking at the sections on the Church, we must discern the God-man relation established in Symbolik, one which, as Möhler had required in his critique of panentheism, would maintain the transcendence of God and the integrity of man while neither separating nor identifying them, but holding them in true relatedness. The basis of that formulation is set in the first edition and remains constant throughout the next three and the two editions of Neue Untersuchungen. But in the fifth edition a significant change is introduced.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

It is to this last edition that we must turn to discover the final statement of the God-man relation.

Finally, drawing upon the notes left us by Möhler's students of his final course of lectures on Church history at Munich, we will indicate new emphases in his ecclesiology which emerged as the result of the alteration in the God-man relation in the fifth edition of Symbolik. This must necessarily be a tentative exercise, since Möhler did not live to re-edit the ecclesiological sections of his book in its fifth edition--if, indeed, he contemplated any important changes in them. Symbolik, as he left it, was revised up to and including section 26, the discussion of justification and good works; the remaining sixty-eight sections, including those on the Church, were taken over from the fourth edition.

The Transcendence of God and the Freedom of Man

The first task, then, is to uncover the God-man relation as it is set forth in the first four editions of Symbolik, and to indicate its effect on the ecclesiology of Möhler's masterpiece. This formulation is in the same line as that of "Anselm," employing as its tool Möhler's evolutionary reinterpretation of the classical image-likeness distinction. That distinction had been an application of the notions of potency and act. The image of God in man, which Bellarmine, as quoted in Symbolik, defined as ipsa natura mentis et voluntatis, is created by God alone: the likeness of man to God is the actualization of that potency in virtute et probitate.[1] That movement of potency into act is the achievement of the collaboration of God and man. In "Anselm," Möhler had understood this distinction in an organic way: imago is the seed which unfolds into the fullness of similitudo. That process of growth and development is only accomplished Deo adjuvante. The self-communication of God in grace and revelation is the presupposition on the basis of which man grows to be what he should be: the image of God come to full likeness.

This line of thought led to the question--not explicitly raised in "Anselm"--of the necessity of grace and revelation for the human being to be human. If the likeness of man to God were the fully developed nature of man, then it must follow that man not come to that likeness is undeveloped man, stunted in nature, not fully human. A difficulty arises from this on either end of the divine-human polarity. First, man's integrity, a major concern for Möhler as the critique of panentheism in Athanasius made clear, seems undermined in that the human requires divine self-communication simply to be human. Second, God's freedom is compromised; for it appears that man by the very way in which he is created, is not only open to divine self-gift, but in need of it purely for his natural development. Thus grace and revelation, the internal and external communication of God, are owed to man by a creator who has fashioned him to be incomplete without them, even as creature.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, p. 66, n. 4.

One expression of this double danger is Möhler's insistence in "Anselm" that there is "an objective unity of revealed doctrines with the truths to be developed out of reason."[1] It is apparent in his defense of scholasticism at the beginning of the second section of his study of Saint Anselm, that Möhler is opposing himself to enlightenment rationalism and religious irrationalism.[2] When beginning the research that led to Athanasius der Grosse, he had spoken of two trends imperiling religious thought in his time: one was a mystical impulse which saw the theological enterprise as endangering religious feelings, and the other a rationalism which simply sundered faith from reason and reduced religion to useful moral maxims.[3] The first separated reason from faith for the good of the latter, the second for the good of the former, but, in either case, separation was the result. That projected preface to Athanasius explains the context of "Anselm" as well. It is in opposition to these two trends that he praises Anselm's scholasticism so highly on three counts:

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:139.

[2] Ibid., 1:129-135.

[3] Theologische Quartalschrift 119 (1938): 114-117.

> . . . first, that Anselm was convinced that whoever does not believe does not attain to mature spiritual life, to mature rationality; second, that mere faith is not to be the ultimate, but rather that, since the undeveloped divine image in man (imago impressa) should be expressed, this [image] must be perfected and thus advance to knowledge by means of faith; third, that the content of faith, the revealed doctrines, must be identical with the truths of reason, because otherwise the implicit rationality of man would not become explicit.[1]

Simply by quoting this passage out of its context, a danger becomes obvious. If "Anselm" opens the way to a God-man relation in which man is not fully rational without revelation, it is a short step to another way of formulating that relationship whereby fully rational man arrives at revelation. By overstating his case against the currents which would divorce reason and religion, Möhler could come perilously close to making religion a stage in reason's development. Although Hegel never exerted the influence over the Catholic Tübingen theologian that Schleiermacher had in 1825, the road toward Hegel was an open possibility. How open it was can be glimpsed in an extraordinary statement in an article published in 1830, the very year that the beginnings of Symbolik were taking form, "Über das Verhältnis, in welchem nach den Koran Jesus Christus zu Mahommed und das Evangelium zum Islam steht. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der künftigen Schicksale des letzteren gegenüber dem Christentum."[1]

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:138.

There Möhler notes that there may be some who find the Islamic understanding of God preferable to the Christian, presumably because of the former's stress on monotheism, and who are accordingly disposed to overlook ethical viewpoints foreign to the western mind.

> It is a concern of few men to follow out and ground the speculative value of a doctrinal system. Accordingly the remark may be completely superfluous for many that the monotheism of Islam does not satisfy philosophical reason and in fact must be rejected the moment there is any discussion of the conceivability of a particular notion of God. That the divinity is one person is completely and totally unthinkable, thoroughly unreasonable, and contrary to all true speculation. That God did not become man is likewise nonsense.[2]

What was once folly to the Gentiles it is now folly to reject. The Trinity and the Incarnation, the two central elements of special revelation, are discovered to be the content of "philosophical reason." This is the principle of the identity of reason and revelation enunciated in "Anselm" carried through with a vengeance. Clearly Möhler has come very close to Hegel who made the core doctrines of Christianity a priori necessary from the viewpoint of absolute thought. Identity is lifeless. But identity which differentiates itself in reflection and posits its unity in self-love is living, is Spirit. If God is not to be an empty concept, he must be externally engaged in this process of differentiation and acceptance.[1] Thus the Trinity is the religious expression of what is rationally necessary. So, too, the Incarnation is the religious expression, necessary for prephilosophical man, of the Absolute Idea in the finite world. It is the image of man's potential nature, prereflectively grasped.[2] There is no indication that Möhler was consciously adopting an Hegelian stance in 1830, although the Berlin philosopher's influence was certainly felt in Tübingen in both the Catholic and Protestant faculties. But it is apparent that the Hegelian path could well be trod from this sort of rigorous understanding of the identify of the "truths of reason" and the "content of faith." That principle so understood is a variant of the familiar Hegelian dictum that the rational is the real.

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 12 (1830): 3-81; republished in Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:348-402, under the title "Über das Verhältnis des Islams zum Evangelium."

[2] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 1:397f.

Given this rigorous application of the principle of "Anselm," one of two possibilities must be affirmed.

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[1] G, W. F. Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, 2nd German ed., trans. E. B. Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), 3:35f.

[2] Ibid., 3:72f. One may find no finer statement of Hegel's apologetic for Christianity by way of subsuming it under the higher viewpoint of philosophical speculation, especially with regard to the primary Christian dogmas, than the section on Christianity in the Lectures on Philosophy of History, trans. J. Sibree (New York, 1899), pp. 318-336.

If human reason is thwarted in its own domain without the doctrines of the triune God and the Incarnation, either reason is capable of discovering those truths by itself, in which case revelation is at best the *a posteriori* confirmation of what is perceived as *a priori* necessary, or revelation is demanded by reason simply so that the latter may find its natural fulfillment; either revelation is in fact superfluous or the human being is irrational, in the fullest sense, without it. The first possibility, which could have led him toward a position similar to that of Hegel, was never Möhler's intention, however open to such an interpretation the peculiar passage in his essay on Islam may be. The second alternative is precisely the danger which could be glimpsed in "Anselm" and which finds its most extreme expression in this same passage.

This danger in his way of defining the God-man relation, the danger of undercutting human integrity and restricting divine freedom, is present in *Symbolik*. Since the critique of panentheism in *Athanasius der Grosse*, Möhler had been concerned to guarantee the human element in relationship with God. Thus, in his study of the great Alexandrian Father, he had demonstrated that the maintenance of the immanent trinity was essential to the transcendence of God to creation, that without it God and the world collapsed into one another. But the transcendence of God meant the freedom of man. It meant that being finite was a valid way of being. The limitations placed on the finite being did not destroy the value of being. Man could be man, not a stage in the becoming of God. The transcendence of God and the validity of man freed both to be truly related, not identical. That relationship is obviously difficult to formulate. For man's integrity does not entail his independence. Although the finite has a legitimate vocation to be finite, it still stands in absolute dependence upon God. How is such a relationship to be understood? He had attempted to answer that in "Anselm" by showing that the finite is created as capable of receiving the infinite. Man is in his very nature open to God's self-communication; he is the one to whom God gives himself. Thus man always stands in receptive relation to God; his receptivity is what makes him what he is. That receptivity had turned in on itself; the *imago* had not grown into *similitudo*. But the *imago*, the capacity for God's self-gift, was still present, however undeveloped. Man in his essential nature had remained intact; he had not ceased to be human. These ideas find expansion in the first four editions of *Symbolik* and a decided enrichment in the fifth.

The Structure of *Symbolik*

The ground-plan of *Symbolik* requires comment. The doctrine of the Church is not taken up until the close of the first book. Since that book has treated the doctrinal differences between Catholicism and the Lutheran and Reformed churches, leaving the "sects," i.e., Anabaptists, Mennonites, Quakers, Pietists, Methodists, Swedenborgians, Socinians and Arminians, to the second book, this means that the principal doctrinal positions are all set forth prior to the question of ecclesiology. In the second and following editions Möhler began his treatment of the Church by noting:

> Undoubtedly it has often been an occasion of surprise and indeed has been made into a complaint against us by well-intentioned readers that we have not treated the doctrine of the Church before all which has been advanced up to this point. For it seems to be self-evident to place before the doctrines of a confession the statement of the authority which it follows and the sources from which it operates.[1]

In the first edition, Möhler had introduced his discussion of the Church by observing:

> Remarks have already been made at various points on the connection of individual Catholic doctrines with our concept of the Church. Now we will see how they are all united in this [concept] and contribute their share, as it were, to its construction, or if one prefers, how the opposition with regard to the doctrine of the Church can only be understood and evaluated when all the individual points of difference treated up until now are kept clearly in view.[2]

The subsequent editions, in response to the surprise of those well-intentioned readers, expanded this considerably. Möhler explains at some length that his goal has been to penetrate through the systems of Catholic and Protestant doctrine to the ruling idea, "to let that which receives light follow after that which gives light, and the conditioned follow the internally conditioning."[1] It frequently happens that the norms for faith are employed in a particular way in order to bring them into accord with preconceived opinions. In fact, this has been the usual way in which those "outside the Church" have appealed to scripture. Luther did not begin by attacking the prevalent notion of the Church and its connection with scripture and then proceed to bring his teaching on justification and sanctification into accord with his altered ecclesiology. On the contrary, it was his understanding of the redemptive economy which shaped his understanding of the Church and its authority. This is true not only as a matter of historical fact but as a matter of systematic procedure. Möhler is not interested in adopting a course of investigation which corresponds to Luther's or Calvin's or Zwingli's historical development; he is determined to begin with the guiding conception which allows the entire doctrinal system to be grasped "scientifically." The fundamental viewpoint of the Reformers, "particularly their formulation of the relation of the believer to Christ," is the formative influence on their ecclesiology. And it is the tracing out of the Protestant system which determines the format of Symbolik, the presentation of Catholic doctrine accommodating itself to it.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:384.

[2] Ibid., 2:247.

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[1] Ibid., 1:384.

The "complaint" which Möhler admits has been lodged against the arrangement of Symbolik did not come only from "well-intentioned" readers, if by that he meant sympathetic. Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, Lutheran professor of theology at Bonn, charged, even after the explanation added in the second edition, that the ground-plan only served to make Protestantism as incomprehensible as Catholicism because it presumed to explain particular doctrinal positions before explaining the doctrinal norms governing them.[2] Möhler's great opponent at Tübingen itself, Ferdinand Christian Baur, complained that Möhler's claim that he was following the logic of the unfolding Protestant system was in fact nothing more than another opportunity to take a covert swipe at Luther, who, according to the Catholic, would have willingly maintained his allegiance to the Roman Church so long as his doctrine of justification were recognized. Whatever Rome's attitude would have been toward his theology of justification, Baur is convinced that Luther would have been led by the internal logic of his position to the recognition that he could not accept the Catholic view of the Church.[1] It is of interest to note, however, that Baur, eager as he may be to defend Luther's consistency, does not deny Möhler's fundamental point; he agrees that Luther's doctrine of the Church is implicitly contained in his doctrine of justification.

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[1] Ibid., 1:387.

[2] Karl Immanuel Nitzsch, Eine protestantische Beantwortung der Symbolik Dr. Möhlers (Hamburg, 1835), pp. 24-25.

But Möhler has not, in fact, followed an historical plan any more than he has a dogmatic plan, in the usual sense. To do the latter in his comparative study of Catholicism and Protestantism he would have had to do exactly what Nitzsch saw as the obvious procedure, and what his "well-intentioned readers" would have expected: begin with the authoritative norms of the two confessions, the Church and scripture. From a strictly historical point of view, he should have begun in the way Baur indicates: Luther's theory of justifying faith. Instead, he begins with the question of man's original justice. This is the point at which to begin setting forth the germinating core of any Christian system, the God-man relation. To anyone who has pursued the course of Möhler's thought from 1825 on, this should present no surprise. It is the attempt to formulate that relation once he became dissatisfied with romantic panentheism which has spurred Möhler forward and which has shaped his views on all other theological issues. It is this which provides the context in which all his occasional pieces after Einheit in der Kirche may be read. The key moments of that movement have been section 31 of Einheit, the critique of Schleiermacher's trinitarian theology in Athanasius, and the imago-similitudo anthropology of "Anselm."

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[1] Ferdinand Christian Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus nach den Principien und Hauptdogmen der beiden Lehrbegriffe, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Hrn. D. Möhlers Symbolik (Tübingen, 1834), pp. 304-308, n*.

Baur accused Möhler in the much expanded introduction to the second edition of his response to Symbolik of being unfaithful to Catholicism and of imitating Schleiermacher in the ground-plan of his work.[1] Although it is typical of Baur to refuse Möhler the right to take a developmental approach to Catholic doctrine while himself employing such an approach to Protestant doctrine (Möhler did exactly the same thing to Baur in his Neue Untersuchungen), his reference to Schleiermacher is not without point. By 1832, Möhler is certainly not engaging in conscious and deliberate imitation of Schleiermacher. Quite the contrary, as we have seen, the movement of his thought has been a disengagement from his Reformed contemporary in Berlin. But the process of disengagement is also a process of dialogue, as was observed in Athanasius: the refinement of Möhler's own position is accomplished by criticism of Schleiermacher's. Necessarily Möhler's interests coincide with those of the theologian over against whom he defines himself, however different their conclusions may appear. For Schleiermacher, piety is an internal experience of the divine-human relation, the feeling of absolute dependence. Christianity is a modification of the inner experience of the God-man relation, a particular form of piety, "a monotheistic faith, belonging to the teleological type of religion, and is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth."[1] Dogmatics is the organized exposition of doctrines in so far as they express that peculiar understanding of the God-man relation. "Christian doctrines are accounts of the Christian religious affections set forth in speech."[2]

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[1] (Tübingen, 1836), pp. 60f.

Möhler's treatment of the opposing doctrinal systems of Protestantism and Catholicism in Symbolik is based on a similar approach. Piety, in Schleiermacher's sense, is the central element of a doctrinal system in Möhler's presentation. The God-man relation is the core. Every doctrine reflects the way in which that relation is formulated. It is there that Möhler insists the two systems differ: the Catholic and the Protestant doctrinal structures rest upon and are determined by different and opposed ways of formulating that fundamental relation. It is that conviction which guides the format of Symbolik. This doctrinal method, one of following out the "organic" unfolding of the core insight of divine and human relatedness into elaborate systems of doctrine, is so apparent to Möhler because it corresponds to the development of his own thought. He maintained, as we observed, that his approach is neither entirely new nor learned from Schleiermacher.[1] This understanding of the dogmatic enterprise is not unique to Möhler among Catholics of his time. It may in fact be considered the common property of the Catholic Tübingen school.[2] But it is Möhler, as the foremost representative of that circle, who has given it its depth and richness in practice. This approach to systematics means that any treatment which begins with the Church or with scripture or with any norm for the content of faith, however expressed, must necessarily be ab externis. The Church is comprehensible in its fullness only as the social expression of the uniquely Christian piety, i.e., of the Christian experience of the God-man relation. Thus the Church is not the external guarantor of dogma, nor is dogma given to the Church. Both grow up together, arising as expressions of that central experience of the mutual relation of the infinite and the finite. Thus the Church itself is doctrine, and the truth of doctrine is affirmed by the very existence of the Church. From this perspective, Möhler's plan for Symbolik ceases to be arbitrary and polemical and instead emerges as necessary. It is this same necessity which leads us to take up the God-man relationship in Symbolik, at least in outline, before examining its ecclesiology.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 2nd ed. trans., p. 52.

[2] Ibid., p. 76.

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[1] See the reference to Schleiermacher as "catholicizing," Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 514-515.

[2] Drey's ideal of "scientific theology" had been to uncover the fundamental germinating "idea" of a doctrinal system and to follow its organic evolution, thus bringing to light the internal logic and true unity of the system; for him this "idea" was the Kingdom of God, itself a way of expressing what Möhler meant by the God-man relation; see Drey, Kurze Einleitung in das Studium der Theologie, pp. 35f. F. A. Staudenmaier advocated and put into practice (Die christliche Dogmatik, 4 vols. [Freiburg, 1844-1852]) this same approach; see also "Die Dogmatik als Wissenschaft," Jahrbücher für Theologie und christliche Philosophie 2 (1834): 323f.

The Anthropology of the First Edition (1832)

The position which Möhler adopts with regard to the primitive state of man, original justice and holiness, undergoes significant development in the six years between the first edition of Symbolik and the fifth. This development is in accord with the direction of his thought since 1825: ever more precise attempts to maintain true relatedness between the divine and human by protecting the integrity of both poles of the relationship. But from the very first edition, one concern is immediately apparent: under no circumstances will Möhler allow himself to move in the direction of romantic panentheism, because of its inherent instability. At the beginning of the first section of Symbolik, on the original state of man in Catholic teaching, he states:

> Man in his fallen condition is able in no other way to attain to the true and pure knowledge of his original state than through the instruction of divine revelation. It is the hard fate of man separated from God that he is likewise estranged from himself and knows truly neither what he was in the beginning nor what he has become. In the description of the original state of man, attention must above all be directed to the renewal of fallen man in Christ Jesus. For since the rebirth consists precisely in the restoration of the original condition, and the transformation and renewal is the first creation regained, although with the difference that the truth, holiness, and blessedness in which Adam dwelt unconsciously, is raised to perfect self-conscious and free possession by means of passing through the opposition in which he was placed with God, so insight into what Christ has restored to us likewise gives us the desired disclosure of what had been bestowed upon us in the beginning. This approach has been employed always and by all parties when the original state of man was to be explored.[1]

There is to be no question of an evolutionary relationship between God and the world in the sense of Schleiermacher's Sabellian economic Trinity. The incarnation does not inaugurate a new stage of man's being related to the transcendent. Rather, it is the restoration of what had been true at the beginning and lost. Given the critique of Sabellius-Schleiermacher in Athanasius der Grosse five years earlier, the direction of Möhler's thought is clear. The history of the human race is not the material for divine self-unfolding. The human being as created, as redeemed, and as sanctified and brought into ecclesial unity is not the counterpart to a God who becomes Father, Son, and Spirit. The transcendence of God, which is guaranteed by the doctrine of the immanent Trinity as Möhler had sought to demonstrate in Athanasius, is the counterpart to the integrity of man. The human race was not created radically incomplete in its spiritual life. The story of the race is not the gradual acceptance of a completely new relationship to God, but rather of a loss of integrity and a restoration to integrity. It is any form of evolutionary pantheism which Möhler is determined to avoid.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 3.

But there is another element in this passage at the very beginning of Symbolik. There is a difference between the state of Adam before the fall and the state of redeemed and engraced man. That difference is not an objective one, i.e., it is not a matter of a new state of relatedness between God and man. The difference is subjective, i.e., man's perception of his relationship with God is changed. This changed perception is not that between fallen man and restored man, which is to be expected, but between Adam and redeemed man. Objectively their state is the same, one of "truth, holiness, and blessedness." But Adam had been "unconscious" of this state, whereas redeemed man was now in "self-conscious and free possession" of the reality of the God-man relation. Möhler is very clear concerning the means by which this self-conscious and free possession has come about. It has been achieved by the experience of being in opposition to God. The rejection by man of the relationship with God seems to be the condition of making man conscious and free in that relationship. When Möhler rejects an evolutionary God-world relation, he does not intend to exclude an evolutionary understanding of the human pole of the relation. The relationship is established freely by God. The affirmation of divine transcendence and relatedness, or of the immanent as well as the economic Trinity in the terms employed in 1827, means that the relationship between God and the universe cannot evolve, in the sense of the mutual unfolding of the two poles. But the human grasp of the relationship, its appropriation and formulation by man, does change and develop. To deny this is to make the God-man relation into a denial of history in its deepest sense. The difficulty here, however, is that Möhler appears to make the process of human development in relation to the divine dependent on the experience of estrangement from God. Möhler could easily be gravely misinterpreted on this point. A few pages later he writes of Luther that, to his credit, he

> knew nothing of the later negative conceptions of a simple innocence, of an indifference between good and evil, in which paradisiac man is supposed to have found himself, and was in addition far removed from those approaches which make the doctrine of the sinful fall into foolishness and have the human race take up a course which was the necessary entry into perversity in order to become the passage to a self-conscious return.[1]

To this Möhler appends a note:

> A test of Adam was necessary by which man might determine himself and through which he might bring the goodness which he already possessed to self-consciousness.

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[1] Ibid., p. 9.

> Now of course the fall did effect this elevation to self-conscious and free possession of truth and goodness, since, through God's grace, evil itself must serve toward the advancement of goodness; but the simple assertion of the necessity of the fall raises evil itself to goodness.

Clearly, then Möhler does not intend to espouse such a position himself. What then is the meaning of the peculiar statement found in the first four editions of Symbolik that Adam attained to "self-conscious and free" possession of truth, holiness, and blessedness, by experiencing "opposition" to God? The answer to this question and the reason why the statement was removed in the revisions of the fifth edition focuses our attention on the development which the God-man relation underwent in Möhler's thinking during the last six years of his life.

When speaking of the Catholic doctrine of the primitive state of man, one must distinguish between that which is common to Adam and all his descendents and those "privileges" which are unique to him.[1] The former, Möhler explains, consists in the fact that the first man and all human beings are spiritual beings who possess free will and are able to know and love God and to view all creation in relation to him. This is what is meant by the imago Dei in man. Although he does not explicitly cite Bellarmine as an example of the traditional theological distinction of

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, p. 57.

"image" from "likeness" until the next section, it is apparent that Möhler here understands imago as the human "religious capacity" or faculty. What differentiated man prior to the fall from the rest of the race is summed up in the statement of the Council of Trent that he was "holy and just," which is equated with "completely acceptable to God." This is understood to mean that all the spiritual faculties of man as well as all bodily impulses, were perfectly subordinate to and coordinated by his reason. These "lower activities of the soul," it should be remembered, would include for Möhler not only volition, but understanding (Verstand). Thus in Adam, the discursive intellect stood in total openness and complete service to the intuitive intellect, reason (Vernunft). Primitive man was perfectly attuned to the reception of divine revelation. This "moral" state of perfect accord between God and man, of unimpeded receptivity to God's self-communication, has traditionally been termed "original justice."

This, Möhler maintains, is a brief digest of Catholic doctrine which is adequate to the two primary concerns which lie behind it: the avoidance of any imputation to God of the origin of evil and the maintenance of the totally free nature of the fall. These two goals are accomplished by the insistence of the Catholic doctrine that man had been furnished with such gifts by God that his sin can only be imputed to the misuse of his own free will. But theological speculation has gone further with the Church's blessing.

For the scholastics, original justice could only be understood as an accident of Adam. This is perfectly obvious, Möhler explains, because original justice was lost through man's fall, and all will admit that what belongs to the very substance of an entity cannot be lost without destroying the entity itself.[1] This becomes the key point in the subsequent attack on the classical Lutheran position regarding original sin, rendering it "absolutely unthinkable."[2] But further, not only is man's original justice an accidental quality, it cannot be regarded as a result attainable by those natural powers which belong to his substance. This is the view ascribed to "many" theologians; by the fourth edition of his work, Möhler had enlarged that to "most" theologians, and there is no question but that he is one. His reason for this is based on the principle enunciated at the outset, that the redemption worked in and by Christ, which is a restoration of man's original condition, is parallel in its effects to the state of Adam before the fall. In the economy of salvation a supernatural intervention is essential for man to become "holy and just." If man, by the exercise of his natural powers, had been able to attain that state prior to the fall, why should he not be able to do so, at least in theory, after the fall, for his natural powers, belonging to his essential nature, have not been destroyed? Such a conclusion renders the incarnation and redemption superfluous and is therefore untenable. Just as little as his descendants could Adam have attained purely naturally to holiness.

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[1] Möhler, *Symbolik*^{1}, p. 5.

[2] Möhler, *Symbolik*, p. 106.

> Supported by a very constant tradition, demonstrated with great erudition by Bellarmine, [theologians] have accordingly explained original justice through a supernatural activity of God upon man, and have in fact obtained by this means a very great point for all of theology.[1]

This "very great point" gained is the conclusion that the image of God in man cannot be raised to the likeness of God by man's own endeavor. For imago to become similitudo divine communication is required.

This, however, raises the questions posed by the anthropology advanced in "Anselm" five years before. The image of God is equivalent for Möhler to the spiritual nature of man, to intellect and will. Image has been described as a capacity for communion with God. If that capacity, which is the very essence of the human being, remains undeveloped, can the being truly be human? Möhler has made the question even more insistent by relating imago and similitudo not simply as potency and act, as had Bellarmine and others, but as the inception and term of an organic process. This "organicizing" of the potency-act relationship is a recurrent element in Möhler's thought. Here its effect is to make the image of God the unfolding kernel, the seed which contains within itself the mature expression which is likeness to God. This seems, however, to underline the difficulty: if the human, which is essentially the image of God, does not attain to its own maturity, to full likeness to God, is it not stunted, in a sense aborted?

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 6.

The problem is stated in slightly different terms in the first four editions of Symbolik. The "strong supranaturalist character of Church doctrine" is emphasized by this formulation of iustitia originalis as an accident conferred on man as a pure gift by God.

> . . . supranaturalism cannot be grounded first through the fall into sin, but instead simply through the insight that for the finite human spirit as such, left to itself, a true living knowledge which entails a real love of God penetrating the relationship to all creaturely existence, is in itself impossible, and becomes possible only by God's power uniting itself with man's finite ability and consequently elevating the latter to an infinite power, through which the irrational relation of the finite spirit to its infinite vocation is equalized.[1]

Here the difficulty which we noted first in the 1828 essay on Anselm of Canterbury is explicitly acknowledged and accepted as precisely that--a difficulty. A "living knowledge" of God, i.e., a positive intuition of the divine as opposed to the inferential construction of the Verstand, necessarily passes over into the love of God which is recognized as the ground and becomes the informing element of man's relation to all his fellow creatures. This knowledge which is love is the "infinite vocation" of the human being. But the finite spirit "in itself" as Möhler emphasizes, i.e., apart from the question of the fall, is incapable of attaining such knowledge and so such love. The relation between the human being and this knowledge of God which is his "vocation," his task, his reason for being, is "irrational." The self-communication of God is absolutely necessary if man is to grow into the likeness of God. That self-communication takes two forms which "run parallel to one another," external revelation and "internal enlightenment and strengthening," grace. This is familiar from "Anselm" and, as in 1828, the contrary position which Möhler is concerned to exclude is enlightenment deism. The necessity of revelation and grace and their "inseparable unity," he tells us, are "the exact opposite of naturalistic views."

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[1] Ibid.

"Holiness and justice," "likeness to God," "true living knowledge which entails a real love of God"--these various expressions all designate a reality which is a supernatural gift, as much for the first man as for all other men. As supernatural, it is added to man's nature, his substance; it is an accident of the first man as it is an accident of redeemed man. Were it otherwise, it must be either inherent in man's essence, in which case fallen man ceases to be human, or attainable by man's natural powers, in which case the redemption is unnecessary. Möhler added, however, that this view of original justice as a donum supernaturale is a theological opinion which, although it may be entirely in accord with Church doctrine, is not itself part of that doctrine.

Two points may be noted. First, it is readily seen that in 1832 Möhler's theological anthropology, his way of formulating the God-man relation, stands in full accord with his expressions in the crucial years 1827-1828 when his dissatisfaction with romantic panentheism found voice in his studies on Athanasius and Anselm. Clearly there has been a development and clarification of his thought in preparation for Symbolik, largely due to his research in the later scholastics, the formulae of Trent, and Bellarmine. But the direction of his thought has remained constant. Second, this anthropology allows him to highlight the differences between Catholic and classical Protestant doctrine. As we noted, the placing of the question of the original state of man at the outset of his comparative study of Catholic and Protestant dogmatics flows as much from the first point as from the second; it was not simply a polemical plan, as Baur charged, but a logical step in light of Möhler's own continuing interests.

Responding to Baur

Baur, in his critical response to Symbolik, fastened on the notion of iustitia originalis as an accident. This idea had been used by Möhler to make Luther's position on original sin "absolutely unthinkable." Baur, recognizing that it could prove a two-edged sword, employed it to make the Catholic doctrine appear self-contradictory. And part of Catholic doctrine it was, he insisted, not merely a theologoumenon allied to doctrine. Bellarmine had so regarded it and had based his conviction on the fact that the opinion that original justice was not freely given to human nature prior to the fall but was its natural condition, had been condemned twice by papal authority. "How can an orthodox Catholic, we must ask at this point, maintain that that is not the doctrine of the Church which two popes have expressly declared as the doctrine of the Church?"[1] That original justice is a donum supernaturale is Catholic doctrine--and it is nonsense.

Nonsense, because it completely undermines the necessity of Christianity. Throughout his reply to Möhler, Baur's criticism centers around this theme: Catholicism transforms Christianity into "one great opus supererogationis."[2] Man was created with an "idea of his own perfection inherent in the definition of man." This is Baur's conclusion from the notion of the imago Dei. That perfection cannot be attained without the proper subordination of his sensual nature to reason, which is the meaning of iustitia originalis. Catholic doctrine teaches that that state lies completely beyond the reach of man's natural powers, that man's will, though free, cannot effectively will that subordination. Thus man's perfection, the fulfillment of the human, is by Catholic doctrine "removed outside his nature, set above it as a higher state lying beyond its sphere, and therefore viewed as a supernatural condition."[1] If iustitia originalis is indeed a supernatural state, then it stands "in a relation purely external to man." How, Baur asks, can an idea which is inherent in man's very nature, the idea of his perfectability, the imago Dei although he does not use the phrase, ever be realized if the possibility lies beyond human nature? "Man becomes, in this way, the purely passive recipient of a thing which is actually completely alien to him, with which his nature has nothing in common." This passivity must be absolute, the exteriority of original justice to man complete, for if man could actively accept this original justice by his own will, then he could lose it by his own will. But if he could lose it by an act of free will, it must follow that he could also retain it by his own will. Yet that is precisely what the Catholic doctrine excludes: that man of his own natural power could maintain himself in the state of original justice. So, reversing the reasoning, if man could not freely retain original justice, neither could he by an act of his own will lose it, nor could he consequently freely choose to accept it.[1] Man is completely passive because the relation between himself and his own perfection has been made an external one. The fall of man would simply mean that man is reduced to his natural sphere, the level of existence for which God created him. If this seems a great loss, it is due to the comparison between man's present state and that "accidental" state in which he had found himself. But that sense of loss, that nostalgia for paradise, is not something constitutive of man; it is regarded merely as "an accidental, inessential, and superfluous need."

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[1] Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus, p. 49, n*.

[2] Ibid., p. 52.

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[1] Ibid., p. 47.

Further, this Catholic doctrine entails a very low opinion of human nature.[2] For it means that human reason before the fall, as well as after, was of itself incapable of establishing an harmonious ordering of the sensual nature of man under reason. Not only after the introduction of sin, but even in his paradisiac state, man's will was, apart from the supernatural gift which could effect the proper functioning of the human being, determined as much by his sensual appetites as by his reason. By maintaining that reason could never have established its sway over passion and sensuality without an external supernatural gift, Catholic teaching holds that, left to himself, Adam would have experienced inner conflict between his higher and lower faculties. Thus the "battle of the two principles after the fall," concupiscence, is in accord with man's nature "as it is now, was even at the beginning, and never can be otherwise."

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[1] Baur draws the obvious conclusion in passing: that the fall of man cannot be regarded as in any way a free act of Adam if one is to remain consistent in this train of thought. "The same hand which first raised him, now lets him fall again"; ibid., pp. 47f.

[2] Ibid., p. 48.

This result of the notion that iustitia originalis is an accidental quality of the first human being is precisely what Möhler embraces as the ultimate foundation of the supernaturalist character of his church's doctrine. From this, Baur argues, follows necessarily a "poor and unworthy view of Christianity."[1] For Möhler himself has claimed that the redemption worked in Christ is merely the restoration of man's condition before the fall. But if the grace of Christ stands in the same relation to the human being as original justice had, i.e., an absolutely supernatural one, then Christ's redemptive activity is related to man externally and inessentially. This presents no surprise since, according to Catholic doctrine, man after the fall is natural man, having lost nothing which belonged to his nature, but merely the accident of original justice. Adam's nature after his fall is in exactly "the same state in which it came forth from the hand of the Creator." Original sin had worked no essential change in man which could require the redemption in response to some deep, mortal need.

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[1] Ibid., p. 51.

> We must only be amazed that the author was not more concerned to camouflage and disguise such a conclusion from the eyes of his readers. We quote him in his own words, that a restoration, and so Christianity, can only be understood as a renewal of an original condition. What follows immediately from this? Basically the author says it himself in clear terms on page five, when he agrees with the scholastics that original justice was only an accident, and regards this statement as conceivable for anyone to whom it might occur that Adam could lose this justice, since of course nothing of his substance could be lost to man in any way, not even if he willed it. Thus Christianity as well is merely an accident, something inessential and unnecessary, which leaves man with regard to his true nature exactly as he is, whether he has it or not. For as little as something of his substance can be lost to man, even if he willed it, just so little can anything substantial and essential be added to him, and whatever man becomes through Christianity is and remains a mere accident, a great opus supererogationis, as in fact Christianity seems to be clearly enough in the whole treatment which it undergoes in the Catholic church.[1]

Möhler responded to Baur's attack by claiming that his opponent on the Protestant faculty at Tübingen had misunderstood the meaning of "accident." Baur opposes "accidental" to "necessary," whereas it should be contrasted with "substantial." Far from regarding original justice as superfluous, Catholic doctrine, as Möhler interprets it, regards it as absolutely necessary for man. This entails the absolute necessity for man of Christianity, i.e., of the redemptive grace of Christ, for Baur is quite right in assuming that for Catholic doctrine the state of redemption will stand in the same relation to man as the state of original justice. Thus Möhler unhesitatingly reaffirms *iustitia originalis* as an accident, although at this point he still maintains that this is a theologoumenon, not an element of Church doctrine.[1] But its "accidental" quality is what underscores its necessity.

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[1] Ibid., p. 52.

> Precisely because real and perfect justice in itself is *not* found *essentially* in man, while nevertheless he has the *natural* capacity for this justice, the receptivity for it, and the imperative need for it, and yet despite this can *not of his own* attain it, Christianity exactly satisfies an *essential* need in him and is absolutely necessary to him. The concept of accidental justice stands in opposition to that which is immediately substantially present in the spirit, not to that which is necessary for a spirit to reach its highest vocation.[2]

The *imago Dei* in man can grow into full *similitudo Dei* but not without divine assistance. This is the "natural capacity for justice," already familiar to us as the "religious capacity" of every human being. Before the fall, the fulfillment of that capacity, the perfection of man, could, at least in some sense, be considered natural. In trying to defend the Catholic understanding of the relationship between the supernatural and the natural, as he had presented it in *Symbolik*, against Baur's criticism, Möhler refers his adversary to Francis de Sales.[1] The seventeenth-century bishop of Geneva had written that man in the state of original justice and holiness had "l'inclination d'aymer Dieu sur toutes choses," but, further, had been able to fulfill this inclination naturally. This had been explained by the fact that God in his goodness wills to give all his creatures the necessary power to act in accord with their natures. Thus flames rise, rivers run to the sea, stones fall, and man loves God. For God had created him with "une spéciale inclination naturelle, non seulement d'aymer le bien en général, mais d'aymer en particulier et sur toutes choses la divine bonté, qui est meilleure et plus aymables que toutes choses," and God gives the requisite help for this natural tendency to be fulfilled. This fulfillment can be called natural because it answers to a capacity within human nature. From another perspective, it can be regarded as supernatural because the human nature to which it corresponds is human nature graced with original justice which is "une qualité surnaturelle, procédant d'une faveur très-spéciale de Dieu." The love of God above all created things would be natural, for virtuous actions take their names from their objects and their motives, and this love is directed toward God in so far as he is recognized by natural reason as the creator and final end of all things.

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[1] Möhler, *Neue Untersuchungen der Lehrgegensätze zwischen den Katholiken und Protestanten*[1], p. 75

[2] Ibid., p. 76.

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[1] Ibid., p. 73, n.*; the passage quoted is De l'amour de Dieu l.l.c.16.l.l. p. 290. This is not the first time that Möhler has cited Francis de Sales as a representative of the Catholic theological tradition as he understands it. He and Fénelon are given as examples of Schleiermacher's Catholic forerunners, Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 514.

The import of this quotation in Möhler's presentation seems to be that the fulfillment of the religious capacity or faculty, the imago Dei, could be regarded as natural for a man in whom sensuality was completely subordinated to reason, i.e., who was in the state of original justice. This further emphasizes the intimacy of the connection between human nature and perfected "likeness to God." The "imperative need" for the justice which allows image to grow into likeness is felt once more, and Möhler can thus escape the charge that he has made Christianity supererogatory.

This stands in a continuous line with the views set out in Athanasius, "Anselm," and the first edition of Symbolik.[1] But it serves merely to sharpen the questions posed by Möhler's formulation of the God-man relation in 1828. In the critique of Schleiermacher's essay on the Trinity, Möhler had recognized the need to establish a formula for that relation which would protect the integrity of both poles and maintain their relatedness. He diagnosed the panentheist attempt as a failure because it collapsed the poles into one another. But more and more clearly he seems to have undercut the integrity which he set out to protect. On the one hand lay the panentheist and ultimately pantheist possibility; it was rejected because it dissolved relationship into identity and made the finite into the material for the evolution of the infinite. On the other hand lay the deist formulation of the God-man relation which Möhler had rejected at the outset of his career; it made the relationship purely extrinsic, leaving man's development totally in his own hands. Yet Möhler's attempt thus far seemed to entail an obligation upon God to establish communion with man. God owed grace and revelation to man as a debt in justice. By creating man in his own image, by giving him reason and will so that man might know and love him, God had created a creature doomed to inherent frustration, to incompletion, without him. For Möhler has understood the _imago Dei_ not as a faculty in the human being which can come to a certain natural knowledge and love of God. Rather, as can be seen in his treatment of original justice and with particular clarity in his approving use of Francis de Sales in _Neue Untersuchungen_, he views the _imago_ as a faculty which cannot come to term in natural knowledge and love of God without the proper conditions, those conditions consisting in the subordination of the will and the submission of sensual appetites to reason, i.e., _iustitia originalis_. Those conditions are, however, a supernatural gift, and, it would seem, owed by God to his creature for the latter to develop _naturally_.

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[1] The second edition of Möhler's Symbolik had appeared in 1833 and the third in 1834, the same year as the first edition of Möhler's Neue Untersuchungen. Neither had made any significant alterations in the treatment of iustitia originalis; see, Geiselmann in Möhler's Symbolik, 2:151-160.

But the difficulty reaches further. The image of God in man is a faculty capable not simply of this natural knowledge and love under the right circumstances. It is, in accord with the organic developmental view of the God-man relation which characterizes Möhler and the Tübingen school generally, a kernel capable of unfolding into *similitudo*, supernatural knowledge and love of God, but only in response to God's free self-communication. Once, however, the receptivity for that communication is made a seed which is ready to exapnd and grow into the community of life with God, and which is at the same time identified as the very essence of human nature, then one seems forced to conclude that man is condemned to a stunted, undeveloped, indeed not fully human existence, without grace. The integrity of the human is destroyed. In response to this creature of his fashioning, God seems obligated to reveal himself and communicate his grace to man simply so that the latter may be man. The gratuity of God's self-gift is called into question. The distinction between nature and supernature is in grave danger of being obscured, even as Möhler insists that his understanding of the Catholic theological tradition making *iustitia originalis* an accident adequately distinguishes between the two. Such an "accidental" understanding of original justice does prevent the supernatural from simply being identified with the natural. But by emphasizing that the "accident" answers an "imperative need" in an "irrational relation" to an "infinite vocation" Möhler does make the supernatural into a debt owed to the natural.

Oddly enough Möhler had indicated in 1830 a vision of Catholic theology which could have avoided the difficulties described. He had written a letter to his brother, part of which shows his preoccupation with the comparative dogmatics of his first series of lectures on symbolics which he would deliver a few months later. He located the difference between Catholic and Protestant doctrine in their different evaluations "of the nature of man and his abilities, even after the fall."[1] Catholicism's view that man possesses reason and freedom after the fall is "the innermost basis of a certain rationalism in Catholicism." Yet, because Catholic doctrine also insists on the absolute necessity of divine influence upon man, "it is likewise supernaturalist." Protestant theologians have swung from one posture to the other.

> Luther and Melanchthon were only supernaturalists; now for the most part they attack the doctrine of Adam's fall into sin and its consequences for the human race, and likewise divine grace. Consequently they are in great part now merely one-sided rationalists.[2]

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[1] Lösch, J. A. Möhler. Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe, 1:395f.

[2] Ibid., p. 360. This is an early expression of the repeated theme in Symbolik that Protestantism has led to the extremes of rationalism and supernaturalism, that it had been dualistic and had become monistic; see Möhler, Symbolik, pp. 292-302 (Symbolik[1], pp. 181-186).

But in Catholicism "rationalism and supernaturalism interpenetrate one another," or, as he had described the goal of Catholic thought, "manhood and Godhood must permeate one another."

This view of Catholicism as the balance and interaction of rationalism and supernaturalism is not that of the first four editions of Symbolik or of Neue Untersuchungen, where we read that the theological tradition of Bellarmine et al., that the original justice is a supernatural operation of God on man, has had a profound effect on theology, for "here with one blow the strongly supernaturalist character of Church doctrine was asserted and consistently worked through."[1] This seems to be a "one-sided" supernaturalism, a failure to achieve the balance which he had deemed so important in 1830. So intent has Möhler been on avoiding "rationalism," the enlightenment-deist view of man the reasoner, the isolated and independent Vernunft who by his immanent ability attains self-perfection, that he has tended to overstress the supernaturalist element with the double consequence of imperiling the value of finite being and restricting the freedom of infinite being. The opportunity to re-think the position in which he had placed himself arose when Möhler stepped outside the context of his investigation of Catholic and Protestant dogmatics, his revisions of Symbolik, and his increasingly bitter exchange with Baur. It was provided by his intervention in the controversy surrounding Louis Bautain.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 32.

The Bautain Affair: Seeing the Problem Afresh

It is not our concern to examine Bautain's traditionalist theology or to enter into the merits of either party in his dispute with the bishop of Strasburg, Jean Francois Marie Lepappe de Trévern, or to compare the French traditionalist movement with the Catholic Tübingen school.[1] For us the debate in Strasburg is of importance only in so far as it was the occasion of Möhler's open letter of advice to Bautain which contains the indications of the changes which would appear in the fifth edition of *Symbolik*.

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[1] The best work on Bautain has been done by Paul Poupard, *Un essai de Philosophie Chrétienne au XIXe siècle: L'Abbé Louis Bautain* (Paris: Desclée, 1961), and idem, *L'Abbé Louis Bautain: Introduction et choix de textes* (Paris: Desclée, 1964). In English, Walter Marshall Horton's *The Philosophy of the Abbé Bautain* (New York: New York University Press, 1926) is an interesting and valuable study somewhat marred by its lack of sympathy with the wider concerns of subsequent Roman Catholic theology. Still good is Abbé de Réguy, *L'Abbé Bautain: sa vie et ses oeuvres* (Paris, 1884). Shorter accounts are Edgar Hocedez, *Histoire de la théologie au XIXe siècle*, 3 vols. (Brussels: Édition universelle, 1949), 2:70ff., good despite its somewhat smug neo-Thomist viewpoint, and the excellent treatment by Gerald A. McCool, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), pp. 47-56. The most extensive and thoroughly splendid account of Möhler's involvement in the debate between Bautain and his bishop is that of Geiselmann, *Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligter Überlieferung. Der Grundgedanke der Theologie Joh. Adam Möhlers und der katholischen Tübinger Schule*, pp. 59-78.

In 1835 Möhler published in the Theologische Quartalschrift[1] a letter which he had written to Bautain and which the latter had requested him to publish. In April of the previous year Lepappe de Trévern had requested Bautain's response to a set of six questions on the relationship between faith and reason. The action was sparked by the bishop's uneasiness about the professor's disparagement of Catholic apologetics based on external proofs of God's existence and the demonstration of the credibility of Christian revelation from miracles. When the answers proved unsatisfactory, an episcopal letter had been sent to the clergy of Strasburg, the French hierarchy, and the Holy See, which warned of the dangerous consequences of Bautain's unorthodox opinions.

There was a certain amount of common ground between Bautain and the Tübingen theologians whose support for their French colleague was indicated by their conferral of an honorary doctorate in theology upon him. To a large extent, however, that ground was marked out by their common opposition to eighteenth-century rationalism, moralism, and deism. Bautain had explicitly declared his hostility to the rationalism which dominated French philosophical faculties in his study of philosophical education in France, and when Möhler reviewed the work he joined in describing the French theology based on this rationalism as "an ancient reliquary in the midst of a world which has changed around it."[1] Even while counseling peace and harmony at the close of his letter to Bautain, Möhler cannot resist voicing the wish that the old methods will disappear in France, "as has long been the case among us."[2]

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[1] Pp. 421-453, subsequently reprinted in Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:141-164. References are to the latter.

But there are also positive similarities between Möhler and the Tübingen theologians on the one hand and Bautain on the other. Central to both was the acceptance of the distinction between Vernunft and Verstand as intuitive and discursive reason. This distinction was, in one way or another, common coin in post-Kantian philosophy during the first decades of the nineteenth century, but had received its most influential formulation for Catholics from Friedrich Jacobi.[3] For Bautain this meant that the traditional proofs for the existence of God from the experience of material reality and demonstrations of the credibility of revelation from external signs are invalid, since they are operations of

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift (1834), p. 146. Louis Bautain's brief and still interesting book is De l'enseignement de la philosophie en France au 19e siècle (Strasburg, 1833).

[2] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:163.

[3] It is noteworthy that Bautain placed Kant and Jacobi among his favorite writers; see Poupard, L'Abbé Louis Bautain: Introduction et choix de textes, pp. 72f.

Verstand, *raison* in his sense, and this reason cannot transcend the level of sensible phenomena. Thus the existence of God cannot be proven. Nor can the absolute necessity of the truth of Christian revelation be established, since *raison* is confined to the level of contingent phenomena and cannot attain necessary certitude. This does destroy apologetics as it had been understood and practiced. Not only did the *praeambula fidei* fail to establish the reasonableness of the act of faith, they evidence a complete misunderstanding of faith. At best discursive reason could lead to an apprehension of the need to posit a realm beyond the material world, but it was incapable of penetrating that realm. This penetration is the function of *Vernunft*, which Bautain terms *intelligence*. This is at first purely passive, simply receptive to the ideas of intelligible reality. These ideas are received in intellectual intuition which is in fact the apprehension of the divine ideas, the archetypes of reality existing in God. Here the French philosopher stands in a long tradition stretching from Augustine to the "ontologists" of a subsequent decade.

There is a characteristically nineteenth-century flavor to the intuition of the divine ideas in Bautain's way of combining this notion with the themes of historical community and scientific rigor. The *intelligence* does not remain passive. It moves itno its proper activity of scrutinizing the intuited intelligible ideas so that their full content may unfold under its influence. This is also an element common to many currents of thought among Bautain's contemporaries, the conviction that true and certain knowledge is attainable only by grasping the system of ideal interrelatedness among truths which is the result of the organic development of one central idea. For German scholars this was the ideal of Wissenschaft which had found its way into German Catholic theology in general, and into the Catholic Tübingen school in particular, through the pervasive influence of Schelling. Thus, for Drey the Idee was the Kingdom of God; for Bautain the idée-mère was Christianity itself.[1]

But this evolution from the pregnant intelligibility of the ideas to the scientifically elaborated understanding of the system was accomplished by the passage of the intelligence into act and its operation upon the ideas. This activation and direction of the intelligence is the result of the prior activity of God and of interaction with a community. Vernunft or intelligence is a latent appetite for the intelligible. Such an appetite can be awakened only by contact with its end or goal, i.e., with the intelligible. Thus it is God's activity upon man's intuitive reason which awakens the latter, moves it into act, and so generates thinking. The way in which thinking takes place, its style, its directedness toward the ideas which it has received in its intuition of the ultimate intelligible reality, God, this is the result of education, of the influence upon the individual of the community in education in the broadest sense. But beyond the manner of thought, the incentive for thought comes through the community. For the intuition of the divine ideas in God is an intuition through the community. It is the community of human beings which first presents the ideas which awaken intelligence in the individual. It does so through the tradition of those ideas of which it is the organ and which had developed in and with the community's own historical development. That presentation takes place in the community's formation of the individual, especially through the most basic act of that formation: teaching the individual to speak. Language is the most important and fundamental carrier of the tradition which is the ongoing unfolding of the divine ideas. The fact that the ideas are indeed divine is the indication of the origin of the tradition. The initial impartation of the ideas, since man's intelligence is always passive at first, is revelation of the divine. The beginning of human thought like the beginning of human existence is an act of God. Thus creation is a primordial revelation, the "first revelation" as Drey had termed it.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 113f.

These three elements which are crucial points in Bautain's thought are common ground with the Catholic theologians of Tübingen: the distinction between *Verstand-raison* and *Vernunft*-*intelligence* along the lines of Jacobi, the goal of an organic system of ideas which explicates one central insight, and the notion of a primitive revelation conjoined with creation whose organ is a living tradition under various guises within different human communities. Thus there was enough for Möhler to see in Bautain's traditionalism a near relative of his own struggles with the God-man relation. As his critique of Schleiermacher's panentheism in *Athanasius der Grosse* necessarily entailed self-criticism of his own position in *Einheit*, so his consideration of Bautain's assault on human reason brought with it re-consideration of his own "supernaturalist" formulation of the God-man relation in the first editions of *Symbolik* and *Neue Untersuchungen*.

"Assault" is not too strong a term for Bautain's attitude toward reason. For within *De l'enseignement de la philosophie en France au XIXe siècle* and the massive *Philosophie du Christianisme*,[1] his two principal works to the time of Möhler's intervention in his difficulties with Lepappe de Trévern, Bautain had completely undercut human reason in relation to the divine. Man on his own, apart from the positive activity of God, was incapable of arriving at any definite conviction of God's existence and so at any real knowledge of his own situation. He was, in fact, unable to arrive at any certain, in the sense of necessary, knowledge about anything apart from the activation of his intelligence, his higher reason, immediately by divinely granted intuition of necessary intelligible ideas, the first principles which govern and ground thought and which are identified with the eternal ideas in God, and mediately by the tradition of a primitive revelation of God conveyed to him by his participation in community. This, as Möhler recognized, was "supernaturalism" with a vengeance. In the divine-human polarity, man was not only dependent upon God for existence, but every actualization of that existence, for thought itself. In the terminology we have employed thus far, drawn from Möhler, the imago Dei, man's rationality and freedom, was not only God's gift, but it remained totally dependent upon God for its development. This is not far from the position of Symbolik up until 1835. But when translated into Bautain's framework, it seemed to reveal its "one-sidedness," its extremity.

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[1] Subtitled *Correspondance religieuse de L. Bautain, publiée par l'Abbé H. de Bonnechose* (Strasburg, 1835).

Thus in the "Sendschreiben an Herr Bautain" Möhler poses the question of his God-man relation differently. "What is nature alone, thus the purely natural man, able to do without grace: that is the question."[1] He immediately qualifies that question, however, for there is no such creature as "purely natural man" if that means man apart from any relation to God. For he completely agrees with Bautain that there is an original revelation of God which is carried by the human community in many guises, differing as communities differ. Consequently since no human being who lives in a human community of any sort whatever is totally without some contact with the primitive revelation, one must presume this contact even when "we want to investigate what man left to himself can know of God by the use of his own reason." This must be presumed even when Lepappe de Trévern demands to know what Bautain believes man can know *par le seul raisonnement*. Unfortunately the bishop does not phrase the question with clarity because he is not accustomed to make the needed distinctions.

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:147.

> He does not differentiate between discursive reason [*Verstand*] and intuitive reason [*Vernunft*], between mediate and immediate knowledge. The only antithesis which occurs to him in this is "nature" and "grace." But whether nature knows God with this or that faculty is left undiscussed.[1]

And so Möhler nuances the question: "Is man, imagined with all his powers and capabilities, in the human community with all the means of spiritual education present within it, but without Mosaic and Christian revelation and internally operative grace, able to know God's existence and God's attributes and to believe in him?" To phrase the question as the bishop of Strasburg had is to fall into the trap of the enlightenment, for which "natural man" meant the isolated individual, the solitary thinker without history and apart from his fellows. The question in large part determines the answer, and the question posed starkly in terms of nature and grace without any further qualifications, leads necessarily to the self-perfecting man of the rationalists, with his external relation to a deistic God and his moralistic religion, or to the radically incomplete man of the supernaturalists who neither truly knows nor freely wills. To arrive at a more nunanced answer one must ask a more nuanced question.

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[1] Ibid.

The answer comes from an investigation into the teaching of Catholic dogma on the issue, and especially into the response of the council of Orange in 529 to semi-Pelagianism. Möhler compares several texts in order to answer his question. It is true that the first text cited, that of the twelfth canon of Orange, states that man produces nothing of himself "except falsehood and sin." These are contrasted with "truth and justice" which flow from a source outside man after which he thirsts. But this canon must be read in conjunction with the fifth chapter of the decrees of the same council. There we find that faith in its inception as well as its maturity must not be derived from nature but regarded as a gift of grace, i.e., "an inspiration of the Holy Spirit through which our will is amended from an unbelieving disposition to a believing one, from an irreligious disposition to a religious one." But the words which Möhler emphasizes in the quotation are those which expand the notion of faith: "through which we come to the faith and to the rebirth of holy baptism."[1] This indicates that the faith which must not be traced to nature, which is a gift of grace, is not that which emerges from man's natural faculties but that faith which looks toward the forgiveness of sin and the reception of grace, which places confidence in Christ for redemption. "A direction of the will toward being sanctified is already present in this faith at least after its inception." Later he notes the passage in the seventh chapter in which anyone is reprimanded who claims to be able to think or will anything good or to give his assent to the proclamation of faith apart from the inspiration and illumination of the Holy Spirit. But once again it is stressed that the assent which requires the prior activity of the Spirit is that given to "the preaching leading to salvation, that is to the preaching of the Gospel."[2] The working of grace is needed for the acceptance of the Redeemer's announcement of his saving doctrine. Further evidence is advanced from chapter eight of the degrees of Orange.

The most important text Möhler quotes, however, is from the end of the fifth chapter. The other texts qualify the faith which is the work of a supernatural operation upon man. Here Möhler understands the council of Orange to acknowledge specifically that there is another faith, one which does not lead to salvation directly, which is not summoned forth by the Gospel proclamation. The council had rebuked those who would make the faith "by which we believe in God," i.e., the faith of believing Christians, into a natural reality, for as a consequence they must recognize those outside the Church as believers also. For there are some outside the Church who believe in God, but they do not merit the name "believer" because their faith is not a gift of the Holy Spirit. Möhler comments:

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[1] Ibid., 2:148.

[2] Ibid., 2:149.

> So certainly the synod does not trace every conviction of God's existence and attributes to the Gospel and to grace, not even to the Mosaic revelation, since the expression "those outside the Church" embraces pagans and Jews.[1]

Thus there is a "rational faith" (Vernunftglaube), a "natural faith" (Naturglaube), recognized by the council of Orange. This "rational faith" has as its object the existence of God and certain divine attributes. These are its "truths," to be distinguished from the "wholly different truth" which flows from grace.[2] The council of Trent substantially repeated the teaching of Orange adding further clarifications which Möhler chooses not to discuss because it would overextend his letter. He does, however, discuss the scriptural foundation for this Vernunftglaube, focusing on Paul's letter to the Romans, concluding that Paul does indeed recognize the possibility of arriving at a conviction of God's existence and of certain divine attributes without the support of special revelation and grace.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., 2:150f.

Now Möhler turns to the proofs for the existence of God to which Bautain had denied any efficacy since they are arguments based on sensible data and so belong to the realm of *raison*, discursive reason. Consequently they could not lead to any grasp of metaphysical truths, any appropriation of necessary being or the certainty dependent upon it. Möhler, however, has a more positive approach to the traditional *praeambula fidei*. They do have a validity and can serve a function in leading the human mind to a conviction of the rationality of faith. But they cannot stand alone. They must be combined with an inner intuition of man's openness to God. Here Möhler combines Bautain's position that discursive reason can arrive at the conviction that a supersensible realm is needed for human satisfaction with his own anthropology of the *imago Dei* as man's innate religious capacity.

The *praeambula fidei* are "the most striking proof of the fall of the human race in Adam."[1] For before the fall no rational discursive demonstration of God's existence would have been necessary. The "living thought of God" would have been constantly and immediately present to man. He would have discovered that presence in his own self-understanding and in external reality. The imago would have been similitudo in the terms of the classical distinction; the religious capacity would have been fully formed and operative. That is the state of original justice and holiness, the perfect ordering of man's receptivity to God and the bestowal by God of communion with him. This immediate presence is destroyed by the fall. To use the traditional concepts employed in Symbolik, not only was the gift of holiness, i.e., communion with God, lost to man, but the human being's inner conditioning for receptivity to God's self-communication, the subordination of sensuality to man's higher faculties, iustitia originalis, was lost as well. Thus not only is man not in communion with God in fact, he is not immediately open to that communion as a possibility. On the intellective level this means that man has lost the immediate certainty of God's existence and can arrive at mediate certainty only with difficulty. "Wearily and painfully man must examine his inner being and observe closely whether the name 'God' resounding to him from the external world finds in him an echo and is not a hollow noise." This name "God" comes to man as a primordial element in the culture of every human community as part of the primitive revelation which goes hand in hand with creation. Prelapsarian man could read the letters of that name in the universe with the utmost clarity. Postlapsarian man must piece that name together "only with the most strenuous exercise of all his spiritual powers." The attempt to give certainty to the concept attached to that name "God" is the origin of the proofs for God's existence and the derivation of some of his attributes. Even then, however, the concept at which one arrives and to which one has lent a degree of certainty remains cold, unsatisfying, and largely contentless since the attributes predicated of this God are negatives. "That this existence must be demonstrated is the sign that the divine image has been unspeakably clouded in us; but that it still can be demonstrated is the sign that it is not fully destroyed or completely effaced."[1]

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[1] Ibid., 2:153.

Möhler has combined his image-likeness anthropology with the ideas of primitive revelation and moderate traditionalism, both of which he shares with Bautain, to defend the usefulness of the praeambula fidei while guarding strictly against any rationalist tendency. It is the primitive self-revelation of God which accompanied creation and which is borne by the human race in its apprehension of something beyond itself and the world, something "numinous," however that name "God" may actually be expressed, which finds an echo in man. That echo is the effaced but not destroyed imago Dei, the capacity of the human for God's communication, which is discovered as an emptiness, longing, need, nostalgia for a something more. It is this "something more" which is the desired answer to the emptiness at the core of the human being uncovered in his self-discovery through participation in the human community, to which the discursive arguments for God's existence give a rational acceptability. Möhler here attempts to bridge the gap between Augustine's confession of the restless heart and the scholastic proofs for the existence of God. It is a striking mediation of the apologetics of immanentism and the apologetics of external demonstration, one that is not equaled until Blondel.

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[1] Ibid., 2:154.

This conviction that that which answers the need of the human being does exist is the object of the Vernunftglaube. This is the knowledge of God and the assent of faith which can be attained by "man, imagined with all his powers and capabilities, in the human community with all the means of spiritual education present within it, but without Mosaic and Christian revelation and internally operative grace." Möhler counsels Bautain to be careful in his argument with his bishop for there is a danger that his unqualified response to Lepappe de Trévern's inept posing of the question might well put him in an untenable position. One must fear--and here one detects the concerns of Symbolik--the two alternatives to which so many have seen themselves forced: atheism or pantheism. Earlier in the letter Möhler had mentioned the danger of being backed into a corner where these two become the only choices, either one of which deprives man of his ethical dignity, renders moral choice impossible, and turns Christianity and all its doctrines into nonsense.[1] Now he warns Bautain that he must avoid any possible misunderstanding in which it might appear that he severs all fallen man's connections with God. For if every connection were severed, if, in short, even the imago Dei in man were obliterated, then there is no point of contact within the human being for Christ's revelation and grace. Either man would never be able to come to faith in God, or God would have to believe in himself through man. One would be forced to atheism or pantheism.[2]

A two-fold connection with God remains for fallen man, an inner and outer connection. The inner connection is forged by the fact that fallen man still is in the image of God. That image is part of man's nature, part of his "substance," Möhler had said in Symbolik. The exercise of this faculty of the human being, its fulfillment, is lost through original sin. But the capacity, the emptiness waiting to be filled, remains. This is the source of the "echo" within of the obscure but real first revelation which is conjoined with creation. It is that primitive revelation which forms the outer connection with God. Two points should be noted which will help us to understand the formulation of the God-man relation at which Möhler arrived in the final edition of Symbolik. The first point is that connections between God and man after the fall exist. Those connections are in a sense a reproach to fallen man in that they emphasize his fallenness. The imago Dei is an emptiness, a receptivity which does not receive, a capacity to be filled which remains unsatisfied. The image of God is negativized in fallen man, a faculty which does not function. Creation, the external form of the primitive revelation of God, which had clearly mirrored God to Adam before the fall, becomes the material out of which man must laboriously wrest its message. This is what Möhler means by the statement that the need for discursive proofs of God's existence is a proof of man's sinfulness. But this continued connection, this "thread" as Möhler terms it, between God and man, however negative it may be, is real. Man after the fall stands in a relation to God which is not simply that of creature to creator. Man before the fall, man after the fall, and redeemed man--all are related to God. The connections are never totally severed, as Möhler reminded Bautain. There is never man unrelated to God. Möhler begins his advice to the Strasburg philosopher with the caution that the question must not be phrased in terms of nature and grace. The two cannot simply be placed in opposition to one another. The proper contrasts are between Verstand and Vernunft, between the mediate knowledge of God proper to fallen man and the immediate knowledge of paradisiac man.[1] There is no "state of nature" for man, if that is understood to mean a state of unrelatedness to supernature.

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[1] Ibid., 2:145.

[2] Ibid., 2:154f.

The second point to be noted is the conjunction of creation with revelation. God's creative act is understood as God's self-revelation. This is the notion which grounds Möhler's moderate traditionalism. It is not to be confused with the position which he rejected in his critique of panentheism: that the world is the material of God's self-unfolding. Precisely the objection raised to that view in Athanasius der Grosse is that it undercuts human integrity and diminishes divine freedom. Creation is a free act of God, but the very freedom of the divine will is expressed in the act. It is not the divinity's expressing itself to itself and so evolving to a new self-comprehension which grounds creation and makes it revelatory. Rather it is the divinity's will to create outside itself which makes the divine benevolence apparent. The freedom of the divine creative act is the revelation of divine goodness and love. Thus the creation of nature is the expression of supernature.

Natural Supernaturality: the Fifth Edition of Symbolik (1838)

These points are of importance in the attempt to understand the new formulation of the God-man relation in the fifth edition of Symbolik. The letter to Bautain had provided Möhler an opportunity to approach the vexing problem of man's dependence upon or independence from divine revelation and grace in the fulfillment of his finite being from a point of vantage other than that adopted in his comparison of Catholic and Protestant dogmatics. Having done so he was able to return to the discussion of original justice, and so of the God-man relation in Symbolik, with the two elements we have mentioned clarified. These two elements were not discovered in the course of his intervention in the Bautain affair at Strasburg. They had long lain at the root of his divine-human polarity and formed a common basis with his colleague and former mentor Drey and with the movement of thought associated with the Catholic Tübingen school.[1] But the opportunity to step back from the symbolical framework in which he had worked for five years and from the ongoing argument with Baur, gave Möhler a chance to re-examine his presuppositions and to readjust his own thought. The delicate balance within Catholic theology between "rationalism" and "supernaturalism" of which he had written in 1830 was about to be reestablished.

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[1] Ibid., 2:147.

Thus the fifth edition of Symbolik does not set out in a direction radically different from the previous four in any of its sections. It does, however, aim at a greater clarity and precision and a better balance of the demands of the supernatural and the legitimate claims of the natural.

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[1] See the discussion of Drey's "supernaturalism" in Geiselmann, Die katholische Tübinger Schule. Ihre theologische Eigenart, pp. 426-503.

Möhler had observed that Adam shared with all his descendents the imago Dei, described as his higher faculties, his spiritual, free existence which enables him to know and love God. Adam, however, possessed this imago Dei raised to full similitudo with God, i.e., in the Tridentine expression, he was "just and holy." Möhler had then proceeded to treat this question of original justice under the rubric of "accident." Nothing was said of the "holiness" attributed to prelapsarian man as distinct from "justice." In the fourth edition, which appeared in 1835, the year of his intervention in the Bautain affair, Möhler added in the next to the last paragraph of section one, a statement clarifying his insistence that the position which maintained that iustitia originalis was an accident and thus a supernatural gift of Adam was a theologoumenon and not a doctrine of the Catholic faith.

> Nevertheless an impartial Catholic theologian will not easily be able to come to the conclusion that the fathers of the aforementioned Church synod [i.e., Trent] had not intended a supernatural principle imparted to Adam when they ascribed to him "holiness."[1]

The addition of this sentence in the 1835 edition is of interest for two reasons. First, it is an indication that Möhler felt the pressure of Baur's argument that the "accidental" status of _iustitia originalis_ was indeed Catholic doctrine and not merely revered theological opinion. Although not yet ready to admit that Baur was correct on this point--that would come in the fifth edition[1]--Möhler did affirm that it was almost certainly the intention of the council of Trent even if it was not "expressed in clear words." Second, the use of the word "holiness" at this point, and the emphasis which Möhler placed upon it, when the discussion had been about original justice, effectively equates the two terms. This is why the first four editions ignore the issue of Adam's justice _and_ holiness. Möhler has been far more interested in contrasting _imago_, which is on the level of nature, and _similitudo_, which is on the level of supernature and embraces original justice and holiness, than he had been in distinguishing the latter two terms.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^4, p. 33.

But in the fifth edition we find a new paragraph designed to clarify the holiness which belonged to Adam before the fall. This is a positive quality, not merely a negative innocence which fails to distinguish between good and evil.

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[1] Möhler, _Symbolik_, p. 60, n. 4, quotes the condemnations of Michael Baius by Pius V and Gregory XIII which Baur had noted, _Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus_, p, 49, n,*, Möhler adds: "Accordingly the opinion advanced in earlier editions that the doctrine of the _donum supernaturale primi hominis_ was certainly to be found generally in theologians and is rooted in the whole Catholic system, but that the Church had still not proclaimed anything formally on the matter, is to be corrected."

> When the Church now attributes to Adam in his original state *holiness* and justice, there is in no way meant by this only that he was not disfigured with some contamination hostile to God and opposed to his natural inclination and tendency toward God, but, what is incomparably more, that he stood in the most intimate and interior community with God.[1]

This is directed against any attempt to make the fall the necessary condition for man's self-conscious appreciation of his relatedness to God. This was a concern which Möhler had noted in the very first edition of *Symbolik*[2] and which forms part of his insistence that the incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ does not lead man to a new, previously unknown stage of the God-man relation, but rather restores man to the original relation lost in the fall. The debate with Baur had added weight to this theme, for it was precisely Baur's contention that in Christ man had advanced to a new level of reflective self-awareness and was now able to discover consciously his community with God in what was in fact a pantheist identification of the two.

> Since Herr Baur views the whole history of humanity and that of the individual as a dynamic development, as an unfolding of the powers inherent in it and constituting its proper being, and views Christ himself as the highest potency of this evolutionary process, I must first of all inquire why in this case call only Christ the incarnate God, and not the very first man? For no God could be evolved out of humanity if it were not of divine nature and if God were not already within it from the beginning, indeed if it were not God itself.[3]

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[1] Möhler, *Symbolik*, p. 59.

[2] Möhler, *Symbolik*^{1}, p. 9.

[3] Möhler, *Neue Untersuchungen*, p. 151.

Thus every human being prior to Christ was merely an unsuccessful and imperfect expression of the divinity of humanity. Christ was the perfect expression of what had always been inadequately manifested in other human beings.

> I must emphasize, I have at this point explained Christ as an absolutely natural occurrence whereas Herr Baur wants only that he not be thought of as an absolutely supernatural occurrence. But really, what can be understood under Herr Baur's heading of the supernatural but that we must never define humanity apart from the divine originating and foundational substance (thus not as a house is separated from the architect once he has completed it), but instead that we must formulate a sort of dynamic relation between God and creature much more like that of natura naturans and natura naturata.

Here Baur's Hegelianism comes to the same result as Schleiermacher's panentheism.[1] In the next paragraph Möhler couples Schelling with the two Protestant theologians and quotes his dictum that "the incarnation of God is an incarnation from eternity," i.e., the God who was incarnate in Christ had always been incarnate in humanity, and Christ has simply realized that incarnation perfectly.[2] Such a stance completely undercuts Christ's uniqueness, making him no more divine than the rest of men. DeWette had simply followed this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion when he equated the statement "God became man in Christ" with "Christ was the wisest and most perfect of men."[1] This is the tendency of all modern Protestant systems.

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[1] Möhler specifically mentions Schleiermacher at this point with the added comment that Baur has adopted many of the former's views "without keen examination" of them; ibid., p. 152.

[2] Ibid. The quotation from Schelling is from the Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums. The great influence exerted upon the Catholic Tübingen theologians by Schelling is interestingly evidenced in Möhler's hastening to assure the reader that the opinion quoted is taken from Schelling "in his immature period" and that he "has long abandoned this view."

This is why the position, which Möhler now agrees is Catholic doctrine and not merely sound theological opinion, that man's original justice and holiness were accidents, is so very significant. The insight is received from revelation, for, as Möhler had observed from the very first edition of Symbolik, fallen man cannot come to accurate knowledge of his condition prior to the fall save through revelation.[2] Such knowledge is essential if one wishes to understand the God-man relation. But if one attempts to obtain such knowledge apart from revelation, i.e., "from a purely philosophical standpoint," one easily finds oneself forced into positing "the homousia, the essential equality of the divine and human natures."[3] This homousia of the divine and the human is precisely what he had observed in Baur and what he was convinced Schleiermacher's panentheism must ultimately come to. It is "pantheism and consequently the most arrogant deification of man." In his published letter to Bautain Möhler had spoken of the double danger to be avoided at all costs and into which he feared Bautain's denigration of human reason must lead him: atheism (man cannot know God) or pantheism (God knows himself in man). Here in his final revision of Symbolik he is arguing that the "accidental" status of holiness with regard to man successfully avoids the latter. But does it lead to the former? Baur had claimed that it does, that reducing man's experience of an actualized God-man relation, i.e., his communication with God, to the level of an accident, made that relation so completely external that it ceased to have any necessity or importance. Man might as well not be related to God. In short, to place Baur's criticism in the context of Möhler's two alternatives for Bautain, the notion of holiness as an accident is functional atheism.

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[1] Ibid., p. 153.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 3.

[3] Möhler, Symbolik, p. 60.

Could Möhler avoid this charge? He had attempted to do so, as we have seen, in Neue Untersuchungen by maintaining that Baur had misunderstood the meaning of "accident," that "accidental" is opposed to "substantial," not to "necessary." But with this claim the problem which we observed first with regard to "Anselm" reappeared in heightened form: is man's meaningful existence as a finite being dependent on an intervention of the infinite? Does nature have any validity apart from supernature? Möhler seems to move back into the very posture for which Bautain is criticized.

The affirmation that Adam's holiness prior to the fall is a positive quality, namely "the most intimate and interior community with God," is of great importance to Möhler, however, for another reason besides the fact that man's prelapsarian sanctity is seen to be the same as the sanctity won for mankind by Christ, and the anti-pantheistic consequences drawn from that fact. That positive quality of Adam's holiness indicates the relationship between it and _iustitia originalis_. They are not equivalent terms. Original justice refers to a _donum supernaturale_ by which man's natural faculties are ordered hierarchically so that they may attain their proper end without conflict. Thus, man's sensual nature is subordinated to reason so that his passions do not determine his will. Holiness, on the other hand, is communion with God.

> Now it is a universally acknowledged doctrine touching all, even the highest orders and circles of spiritually endowed creatures, that a relation to God such as that of Adam in paradise is not to be attained and maintained by any natural ability, and that, as a consequence, a special condescension of God is required for this; in other words, that no finite being is holy except through the holy and sanctifying Spirit and that no finite being exists in living moral communion with God except through the communion of this Holy Spirit. This relation of Adam to God, as an elevation above human nature and a participation in the divine, is called, as is implied in the very concept, a supernatural gift of divine grace added over and above the natural gifts.[1]

Original justice is a condition for holiness. It is the proper functioning of man's natural capabilities. Holiness is supernatural "as is implied in the very concept" because it is divine self-communication. This way of distinguishing original justice and holiness is of the utmost importance in resolving the problems which Möhler had taken up in his intervention in the conflict at Strasburg and in avoiding the functional atheism which is the heart of Baur's criticism. It will also lead us to our grasp of his final position on the God-man relation.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 59f.

Because the distinction of Adam's justice from his holiness has now become an important point for him, Möhler enters in Symbolik's fifth edition into a scholastic debate of which no mention is made in the previous editions. That debate centers about the question whether justice and holiness should be distinguished not only conceptually but temporally. One position is identified by Möhler with Thomas, although it had been the view of Peter Lombard before him, and with Bellarmine who is so often Möhler's supporting authority throughout Symbolik; the other position, which is attributed only to "other theologians," had its most eminent proponents in Bonaventure and Scotus.

The first theory bases its understanding of iustitia originalis, which is described as the gift which "establishes the relations of a lofty, holy, and blessed communion between God and man in paradise," on the presumption that gradually conflict would develop between man's sensuality and his spirituality.[1] This means that man's peculiar nature, which is both sensual and supersensual, contains within it the seeds of its own disharmony and that that disharmony would have naturally emerged into open struggle for mastery in determining man's will. Such an open struggle would not allow the community of God and man, which is holiness. Since, according to this theory, man was created with the supernatural gift of holiness, and since that holiness was impossible without the proper ordering of man's natural powers toward the reception of that gift of holiness, man must have been created with that proper ordering. In short, man was, from the moment of his creation, gifted both with the orderly functioning of all his faculties, sensual and spiritual, and with communion with God. Man was created and immediately endowed with original justice _and_ original holiness. Both are _supernatural_ attributes, the latter self-evidently so, the former because man's nature of itself tends toward disharmony between its sensual and supersensual parts.

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[1] Ibid., p. 61. One can see from Möhler's statement of this "presumption" that Baur was in basis quite correct

Although Möhler has not discussed the two theories regarding the temporal distinction between justice and holiness in the earlier editions of _Symbolik_ or in _Neue Untersuchungen,_ it is apparent that he had in fact subscribed to the theory just given. Certainly at no time in the first four

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when he claimed that Möhler's presentation of Catholic teaching on original justice in the first editions of _Symbolik_ entailed a mean estimate of human nature because it made concupiscence a natural condition; see Baur, _Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus_, p. 48.

editions does he give any indication that there may have been a temporal distinction. In fact, as has been mentioned, he failed to distinguish explicitly between justice and holiness at all. And there is no question that the failure to do so means that for him both are supernatural qualities.

The second theory, on the other hand, has as its basis the distinction between justice and holiness.[1] According to this view, Adam was created with a nature "healthy, pure, and uncontaminated" which Möhler explains as meaning that he had "the harmonious interplay of all his faculties." This is human nature, not human nature with the addition of supernature. Möhler subsequently emphasizes the point: original justice is distinguished from holiness because the former is "the quality of nature alone, as it came forth out of the hand of the creator," whereas the latter is "the gift of supernatural grace."[2] This supernatural gift of holiness was bestowed upon Adam after a period of time, according to the scholastic teachers holding this second theory. During that period Adam prepared himself to receive it. Möhler uses the strongest expression for this: man "by his own efforts made himself worthy" of its reception. Only then was this communion with God extended to Adam.

Möhler makes a point of noting that either theory is acceptable and within the pale of Catholic doctrine. Both regard Adam's justice _and_ his holiness as accidents, which, as we have observed, he now agrees with Baur is an element of doctrine. The first theory views both justice and holiness as _supernatural_ accidents, i.e., states not attainable by man's unaided nature. The second theory continues to regard Adam's holiness as a supernatural accident, but views his original justice as a _natural_ accident, i.e., a state which is attainable by his nature employing its own resources. Thus the council of Trent is patient of both theories. Indeed, it very deliberately allowed for the second by its change of wording.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, pp. 61f.

[2] Ibid., p. 62.

There is no question, however, that Möhler himself now holds the second theory. He gives four advantages which this view holds over the first.[2] The first advantage which the second theory enjoys is that it allows one to distinguish "more sharply" between nature and grace. This is, as we have seen again and again, the heart of Möhler's concern with what he calls "the God-man relation." The two poles cannot be understood apart from one another and so must never be separated. But, to be understood, they must be held in relatedness, not identity, and so must never be collapsed into one another. Thus a clearer distinction between nature and supernature is a great point in favor of the second theory, especially since the distinction gains its clarity from its ability to demonstrate "what nature is in itself and what it is able to achieve of itself." This is the great question which Möhler had discerned as the heart of the dispute between Bautain and his bishop. In the context of his letter of advice to the Strasburg philosopher, it should be clear that the phrase "nature in itself" does not mean some hypothetical state of "pure nature," but rather nature "without Mosaic and Christian revelation and internally operative grace."[1] As in that letter, what nature so understood is capable of is explained as Vernunftglaube. Here Möhler specifically answers his question in terms of his anthropology of the imago Dei.

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[1] Ibid., p. 63: "The first explanation regarding the original man was given specifically with the words: 'the justice and holiness in which he [Adam] was created [_conditus_]'; this formula was again altered, in so far as, instead of 'was created,' the words 'found himself' [_constitutus_] were chosen."

[2] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

> That man's spiritual nature, which is in its essence the image of God, has the faculty and the capacity to know him and love him, even more that, in a certain way, it is of itself actually able to love him and that the longing for full community with the divine is a want inherent in its very nature, are truths very clearly set forth in this theory.[2]

This is a concise statement of Möhler's final anthropology of imago and similitudo and a great advance in his formulation of the God-man polarity. No longer is man completely passive in that relationship. Everything he is has been received from his creator and so, as creature, he is totally and utterly dependent upon God. But, as creature, he is the image of God. He has been fashioned as a spiritual nature, capable of reflection and self-apprehension. In apprehending himself he must also, however dimly, apprehend God, for he is God's image. That apprehension clarifies and heightens that image, which is also a receptivity. Thus it becomes a longing with an appreciation, however remote and cloudy and negative (in that it knows better what its object is not than what it is), of its object. This is man's natural love for God. The image of God in man can then achieve its finite fulfillment, i.e., without grace and special revelation. But that very fulfillment is its openness to infinite fulfillment. Fully developed finiteness is the longing for infinity. Man becomes "worthy," to use Möhler's rather daring expression. But to say that one is worthy of communion with another is not to say that the other must establish that communion. Imago when its potentiality is completely developed, when the seed has organically unfolded to its fullest extent, when it has grown into similitudo, is still only "likeness" to God, not union with him. That holiness is, as Möhler says, "in the very concept" a supernatural gift. It is God's completely gratuitous condescension to man. No longer is there any mention of an "irrational relation of the finite spirit to its infinite vocation."[1] The finite spirit has a perfectly rational relation to a finite vocation, because there is a knowledge of God and a love for God proper to it. The infinite becomes its vocation only when it has been supernaturally endowed. The finite thus has its own integrity; there is a value to being a finite being. But in being fully finite, in becoming everything the finite spirit can be, one discovers one's openness toward and longing for infinite spiritual being. At the same time, God remains free; his love is truly love and not the debt owed to justice. In the terms of Möhler's warning to Bautain, man need not be an atheist and must not be a pantheist.

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[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:147.

[2] Ibid., p. 62.

The second advantage of this second theory on the relation of Adam's justice to his holiness is a consequence of the first.

> The adherents of this view are thus in a position to demonstrate conclusively that it was not creation as such which produced anything unsuitable in the God-man relation or any break in man's freedom, but rather that every such unsuitability and every such interruption arose only through the misuse of freedom.

It is not to our point to enter into Möhler's treatment of human freedom. But it should be observed that this is a response to Baur's complaint about Möhler's having made concupiscence something natural to man. However justified such a charge might or might not have been regarding the first theory, the second clearly avoids it by making justice a natural rather than supernatural accident. One can see what had most rankled Möhler in Baur's perceptive criticism: his point that original sin must arise out of nature if man's inability to control his sensual appetites is natural.[1] The second theory allows the assertion that even on a natural level, i.e., without supernatural intervention, the passions need not determine the will. The fact that *iustitia originalis* is a natural attribute means that sin is a possibility for man apart from grace, but not a necessity.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 6.

Early in this chapter mention was made of the statement included by Möhler in the first four editions and removed in the fifth, that man came to conscious possession of his holiness "by means of passing through the opposition in which he was placed with God."[2] It was observed that any notion that the fall was necessary for man's free appropriation of his relationship with God was specifically excluded by Möhler from the very first edition on. Although deleted from the fifth edition, the peculiar phrase finds its explanation in these final revisions. The first theory, which views original justice as a supernatural gift bestowed simultaneously with original holiness at the moment of Adam's creation, the theory which Möhler implicitly held at the time of the first edition, has as its presupposition, he tells us, the notion that human nature had to give rise to the struggle between sensuality and spirituality. The test of Adam which Möhler believed "necessary" would, in accord with this theory, have given rise to that experience even while the supernatural gift of justice enabled Adam, if he chose to cooperate with it, to determine his will by free rational choice, not by sensual appetite. That experience would have revealed to man the gratuity of his justice and so of his holiness and thus have brought him to self-conscious acceptance of them.

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[1] Baur, *Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus*, p. 47.

[2] Möhler, *Symbolik*^{1}, p. 3, n.

It is the third advantage of the second theory that this notion of a necessary experience of "opposition to God," even though not sinful, is rendered unnecessary because "apart from any opposition of evil, there could come to consciousness in man his own nature and its highest longing reaching beyond itself, as well as the evidence of supernatural divine assistance and grace." Man's experience of his own growth from image to full likeness to the divine would yield full self-consciousness of the potentialities of the finite and the beneficence of the infinite. Möhler marks this as "a doctrine which is of the utmost importance."

Finally, the fourth advantage of the second theory is that it allows for the relationship between the original state of the human race and its redeemed state to be viewed as complementary. In this view of the connection between Adam's justice and holiness "the potential situation of man after the fall and the process of his conversion and rebirth are prefigured." This reemphasizes the theme that man's holiness in paradise and his sanctification in Christ are the same, i.e., the latter is not a higher development of the God-man relation. Furthermore this reestablishes Möhler's ground plan for Symbolik in indicating the rationale for beginning his comparative dogmatics with this section on the state of man in paradise.

Two points were noted in Möhler's letter to Bautain as of particular importance in understanding the "God-man relation," the connection between nature and supernature: the rejection of any state of "pure nature" if by that is meant nature apart from any relation to God, and the notion of creation as revelation. Clearly these two elements lie behind the revisions of the first section of Symbolik in its fifth edition. Man can come to a natural knowledge of God and a corresponding love for him without grace and special revelation, i.e., without any special internal preparation and external communication. This is true because there exists in the human being an internal preparation for knowing and loving God which is "natural," in the sense that it is constitutive of the human being as such. That natural internal preparation is the imago Dei. But Möhler does not cease to be a "traditionalist" in the broad sense, i.e., he insists that some sort of external revelation is required for the awakening of that internal image of God. But this external revelation is not "special." It is "natural" in the sense that all creation is natural. For creation itself is the revelation. As was observed earlier, this does not mean that creation is the necessary expression of God in a pantheist sense, but rather that it is the free creation of God and reveals his goodness by its very existence. The fact that creation is contingent, that it depends on the free creative will of God, is precisely what reveals the overflowing goodness of God. The fact that anything exists is a statement of divine love.

This natural internal preparation for knowing and loving God is itself a gift of God who has willed to create man in his image. The natural revelation is due to the goodness of God in creating anything at all. Thus what is called natural is totally dependent on God; it is an expression of the divine will. From this point of view, the natural is supernatural. This is the fundamental posture of Möhler toward the natural-supernatural question. There are not two levels of reality, that of nature and that of supernature, but only one. Nature and supernature are two modes of existence of the same reality. There is no natural man who is raised to a supernatural plane. There is only man who is both natural and supernatural.

It must constantly be kept in mind that this modal supernaturality and naturality is grounded in the freedom of

God and thus in his transcendence. It may otherwise appear that Möhler has here returned to the panentheist world-view of Schleiermacher as if his critique in Athanasius der Grosse never existed. The central element of that critique had been the conviction that panentheism is an inherently unstable position and relapses into pantheism with the result that the transcendence of the divine and the integrity of the human are both compromised. Möhler's position is dependent on the recognition that God's transcendence, his freedom to create or not to create, is the foundation of this natural supernaturality. In terms of the God-man relation, man is naturally capable of becoming aware of his relation to God and accepting that relation in love (although God's entry into free communion with man remains entirely dependent on the divine initiative), while the fact of his existence outside of God is the revelation of the supernatural.

The Munich Church History Lecture Notes, 1837-38

Perhaps the best expression of this way of relating nature and supernature is found in the notes based on Möhler's course of lectures on Church history in Munich during the winter semester of 1837-1838.[1] There he defines history as

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[1] "Einleitung in die Kirchengeschichte," consisting of five parts: (1) "Von dem christlichen Begriffe der Geschichte," (2) "Vom Begriffe der christlichen Geschichte, der christlichen Kirchengeschichte und der Stoffeintheilung derselben," (3) "Eintheilung der Kirchengeschichte der Zeit nach," (4) "Ueber eine besondere Eigenschaft Dessen, der

"the eternal plan of God developing itself in time together with humanity, to prepare himself in it through Christ a worthy worship and reverence proceeding out of the free homage of men themselves."[1] This definition is closely linked with Drey's guiding motif of the Kingdom of God as an eternal idea in the divine mind unfolding in creation. But we are interested in the caution which Möhler raises when he urges the avoidance of two extremes.

> We could give the title of the religious conception of history in general to that which refers everything to the absolute cause, to God. But in doing so, one must not forget what is termed the pragmatism of history in its common meaning, namely that treatment of history which depicts and explains everything in its closest causal relationship and causal nexus.[2]

The course of history can be viewed from a supernatural perspective or a purely natural one. It can be seen from a transcendent vantage-point outside of history or from an immanent one immersed in history. To adopt either view as the exclusively true one is to fall into the extreme against

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Kirchengeschichte mit Erfolg studiren will," and (5) "Ueber den Zweck des kirchenhistorischen Studiums," first published in the Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland (1839): 1-12, 65-77, 129-138. It was republished by Döllinger in Möhler's Gesammelte Schriften, 2:261-290, as an appendix. The original editor of the notes is not known, but the fact that Döllinger chose to include them as a record of the course of lectures in Munich at which he was present tends to support their accuracy.

[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:263.

[2] Ibid., 2:269.

which Möhler counsels. The fact is that both are true. To confine oneself to the transcendent supernaturalist position runs the risk of lapsing into fatalism and anti-intellectualism. To adopt the immanent naturalist view exclusively yields "a history merely for the discursive reason (Verstand)." It ends up either with a mechanistic notion of history which is finally as fatalistic as the transcendentalist history, or with one which has as its operative principle human freedom alone which leads to atomism. The immanent historian is Möhler's familiar enemy, the Aufklärer.

> The first, disproportionately pursued, will become a pantheistic and fatalistic view, and has already become so, specifically through some more recent philosophies; the second will become an atheistic view, which can be of no satisfaction to anyone who bears within himself, even to a slight degree, a more profound view of things.[1]

Once again the Scylla and Charybdis of pantheism and atheism appear. But the true understanding of the God-man relation in history escapes both. In his definition of history, Möhler had written of God's plan working "together with man" so that the worthy glorification which is prepared through Christ emerges from "the free homage of men themselves." There is an immanent causal network in history which explains events. Man's freedom is part of that causal network. Thus the "pragmatism" of history is important and cannot be ignored. But history is the unfolding of what exists because of the creative activity of God. That activity does not cease for, if it did, finite existence would cease. God maintains creation in existence. But the goal of that creation is God himself.

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[1] Ibid., 2:269f.

> For God, as the absolute Being, can have in his activity outside himself no other and higher purpose than himself. In this all other imaginable goals are assembled and sustained; God must have set himself as the goal when he chose to effect ends outside himself. As everything proceeds from him, so everything returns to him; as the whole finite world is a revelation of his Being, i.e., precisely of his inner glory, so is it also the highest vocation of rationally endowed and free creation to proclaim this with consciousness and self-possession.[1]

Creation is the revelation of God's "inner glory" because it reveals by its finiteness his goodness, as we have seen. Part of creation, humanity, is able consciously and freely to concur in that revelation. For humanity to do so with full consciousness and full freedom is the goal of creation, the fulfilled plan of God. Thus God is at work in creation by his creative and sustaining power. Natural causality and supernatural causality are at work simultaneously, not because God and the world are one, but because the world is God's free expression. This is the foundation of the God-man relation.

The second section of the notes of the Church history lectures from the last year of Möhler's life is concerned with the history of the Church within the framework of the larger history of mankind. This makes the Church's life a function of the larger life of the human race. As we have seen from Einheit in der Kirche on, the Church cannot be understood apart from the God-man relation. We have followed Möhler's attempt at understanding that relation through the various editions of Symbolik. As a result of his rejection of the kind of panentheism which he had initially held, a rejection which was the fruit of his critique of Schleiermacher's treatment of trinitarian doctrine, he had been so intent on preserving the relationship of creator and creation and avoiding their identification that he over-emphasized the "supernaturalist" aspect of the relation. As always when one aspect is stressed too heavily, the complementary aspect asserts itself in the difficulties which result. And so despite his concern to protect the integrity of the finite, Möhler had forced upon him the realization that his way of formulating the God-man relation was in fact endangering both the validity of the human being and the freedom of God. This became especially clear in the course of his response to Baur's unsympathetic but perceptive criticism. His intervention in the Bautain affair gave Möhler the opportunity to approach the problem of the relationship with a new, more nuanced answer. He had tacitly assumed the existence of "nature" in abstraction from and opposition to "supernature." The appreciation of the created pole of the God-world relation as the free expression of the divine pole, the recognition that the existence of the relationship was a given from man's perspective but a free act from God's, provided the key which led to notable revisions in the anthropological section of the fifth edition of Symbolik. Now we turn our attention to the ecclesiology which accompanied the development of Möhler's understanding of the divine-human relationship.

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[1] Ibid., 2:264.

CHAPTER V

LASTING INCARNATION: THE CHRISTOCENTRIC ECCLESIOLOGY OF SYMBOLIK

The Ground Plan of the Ecclesiological Sections of Symbolik

Section 32 of the first edition of Symbolik is headed "The doctrine of Catholics concerning the Church. Invisibility and visibility of the Church."[1] In the second and all subsequent editions, the expansion of earlier topics makes the beginning of the ecclesiological treatment section 36, and it is entitled "Concept of the Church. Interpenetration of the divine and human in it. Its infallibility."[2] The shift in categories from "invisible-visible" to "divine-human" is revealing. For the first edition emphasizes the supernaturality of the Church in its invisible and visible life. The human, although very explicitly mentioned, is by no means the decisive factor in the Church. Although in the first edition there is a very decided shift in emphasis from the ecclesiology of Einheit in der Kirche, it remains true that the divine nature of the Church remains of much greater importance in Möhler's thought than the human. This is in accord with the way in which the God-man relation is formulated in the first edition, as we have seen. There it is only by elevation of human nature to a supernatural level that the knowledge and love of God become possible. The finite spirit stands in an "irrational relation" to its "infinite vocation." God is the only effectively active participant in the relation. Against such a background it is to be anticipated that the divine is the central element in the Church.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 264.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:384.

Möhler begins his treatment of ecclesiology with a descriptive definition of the Church which he retained in all the editions of Symbolik.

> Under the Church on earth, Catholics understand the visible community of all the faithful in Christ in which the actions performed by him during his earthly life for the redemption and sanctification of mankind are carried on under the direction of his Spirit until the end of the world by means of an apostolate founded by him and continuing in an uninterrupted fashion, and in which all peoples are, in the course of the ages, led back to God.[1]

In the first edition Möhler immediately followed this definition with a list of three points contained in it which he intended to explore. This formed an outline of succeeding sections. Since a major alteration was made in the ecclesiological portion of Symbolik in the second edition, this outline was omitted. It still furnishes for us, however, an indication of Möhler's objectives in his treatment of the Church.

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[1] Ibid., 1:387.

> Accordingly we have to direct our attention to three points successively. First, to the character of the visibility of the Church; second, to the actions of Christ to be continued in it, in which the unique task of the Church consists; and third, to the episcopate or apostolate instituted by him, the organ through which the Redeemer principally continues to work. With regard to the second point, it is also especially to be remarked that the actions of Christ are recognizably three-fold: the prophetic, the high-priestly and the royal. It is obvious in itself, that the determination of the true concepts of the continuance of the royal and high-priestly function of Christ is once again itself the task of the institutions which receive and maintain his prophetic operation in the Church, for which reason, in regard to this second point, all our attention can be given to this last office. In a word, the question concerning the second point is how according to the Catholic view, true knowledge of the whole economy of salvation in Christ Jesus is obtained, or to discuss the doctrine of scripture and tradition.[1]

This outline explains a great deal about the ecclesiological section of Symbolik as Möhler envisioned it. In basis, this ground plan still holds good in the fourth edition, which is the last occasion the author had for revising his conception, since he did not live to re-edit these sections in the fifth edition. Thus, in the final text, section 36 does deal with the visibility of the Church, although Möhler, from the second edition on, prefers "humanity" to "visibility." Sections 38-42 are concerned with the prophetic office of the Church, which means for Möhler the Church as bearer of the Gospel, and these sections are a working-out of the notion of tradition and its relation to scripture. And section 43 is entitled "The Hierarchy." Section 37, which was added in the second edition, falls somewhat outside this plan and may be the reason Möhler omitted the outline.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 265.

The ground plan is organized around three points of inquiry: the Church's nature, its functions, and its means for effecting those functions. Viewed so, the way in which those points are handled is instructive. Under the nature of the Church, we find section 32 which proposes to treat "the invisibility and visibility of the Church." But the outline tells us that the first point of the definition which must be discussed is the Church's visibility. It is not the invisible Church which presents a difficulty, but rather the visible. The functions of the Church, although they embrace the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ, are in practice reduced to the prophetic office. This is because the meaning of the other two offices can only be ascertained through the first. Thus the prophetic role of the Church is in fact its function as teacher. The two channels of that teaching are scripture and tradition, and it is the relationship between those two channels which Möhler chiefly explores. Lastly, the means by which the Church fulfills its functions is principally the apostolate which is made equivalent to the episcopate.

One may readily observe that in each case the element which Möhler chooses to treat is the element about which Catholic and classical Protestant doctrine would most differ: the status of the visible Church, the relative values of scripture and tradition, the nature of Church office. Möhler's topics are determined to some extent by the nature of his work, comparative dogmatics. But, seen in the perspective of Möhler's own development and in the context of the shifts between the various editions of Symbolik itself, the first and third topics are especially suggestive. Within the context of the God-man relation of the first edition of Symbolik in which the supernatural is the uniquely effective agent, it is not to be wondered at that, when an ecclesiology is attempted which will hold together the invisible and visible elements in the Church's life, it is the visible which will need justification. That a new ecclesiology is, nevertheless, the goal can be seen in the fact that the primary means by which the Church continues the work of its founder is the hierarchy. This certainly suggests a very different understanding from that of Einheit in der Kirche. Most importantly, however, each of the three points of inquiry drawn from the definition is directly related to Christ. The nature of the Church is that of a visible community of all believers instituted by Christ; the activity which the Church is founded to continue is that of Christ in his earthly life; the means by which that is accomplished is the apostolate created by Christ. The Christocentric ecclesiology which had begun to appear in Athanasius der Grosse in 1827 is clearly at work in this descriptive definition of the Church in 1832. The Spirit, who was the generative force of the Church in Einheit, is mentioned only as he under whose direction the Church pursues the work of Christ, and there he is described as "his [i.e., Christ's] Spirit."

For our purposes, the first and third points which Möhler raises from his definition are of primary interest, viz., the Church's nature and the means within it for attaining its end. The other sections contained in the first half of this fifth chapter of Symbolik will be noted in so far as they illuminate our investigation. But since Möhler chooses to center his discussion of the Church's work so exclusively on what he calls "the prophetic office" and since the explication of that office is devoted entirely to the controversial topic of the relationship of scripture to tradition and the nature of the latter, we will prescind from entering into that discussion in which Möhler's contribution was both so original and important.[1]

A "Downward" or "Supernaturalist" Ecclesiology: the First Edition (1832) and Neue Untersuchungen

Ecclesiology is immediately rooted in Christology as soon as Möhler begins to treat the nature of the Church, which will mean primarily its visibility. "The ultimate ground for the visibility of the Church is found in the incarnation of the divine Word."[1] In Athanasius der Grosse Möhler had employed the incarnate Son,"the unity of all the faithful," as the model which allowed him to maintain both the divine and human principles of the Church without dissolving the latter in the former.[2] The inseparable but unconfused union of divinity and humanity in Christ is the paradigm for their union in the Church. But not only is the incarnation the model for understanding the Church, it is very explicitly acknowledged now as the origin of the Church. "If [the divine Word] had buried itself in men's hearts without assuming the form of a slave, and so without appearing in a corporeal way at all, he would thus have founded only an invisible, internal Church."[3] The incarnation is thus the founding of the Church. The manner of the Son's relation to mankind determines the manner of the Church because the moment of his union with humanity is the moment of the Church's birth. This is the basis for the necessity with which Möhler invests the visibility and ultimately the humanity of the Church. The institution of a visible Church was not only suitable in view of the manner of the union of God and man in Christ. For suitability implies that one could have chosen another possibility which might have been less adequate. To say that the form of the Church is suitable to the form of the incarnation is to say that those doctrines are independent of one another and only extrinsically related to one another.

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[1] Möhler's theory of tradition and doctrinal development is one of his most influential achievements and one of the most fruitful attempts in the nineteenth century to deal with that question. It receives excellent treatment in Geiselmann, Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligter Überlieferung.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:388. Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 266: Now as regards the first point, the visibility of the Church, the ultimate ground of this quality is found in the incarnation of the divine Word."

[2] Möhler, Athanasius, p. 290.

[3] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:388.

It is precisely the denial of that independence, that extrinsic relation between doctrines, which underlies Möhler's thought. Such an extrinsic relation would completely undermine the "scientific" character of theology. For science, Wissenschaft, means the logical and organic interrelatedness of knowledge. To isolate doctrines one from another would deprive them of a priori necessity. Möhler certainly does not intend to claim that doctrines are deducible one from another with a necessity which denies the freedom of God who is the revealer of doctrine. Rather doctrines once revealed are discovered to be interrelated in an organic system. Doctrines include and illuminate one another, and all are seen to be the unfolding of the one fundamental idea. For Drey that Grundidee was the Kingdom of God, the eternal idea in the mind of God which unfolded in history. For Möhler it is most often expressed as the God-man relation. But I have indicated that behind that there lies for Möhler the deepest grounding of all, the freedom of God. It is the fact that creation exists, that there is anything at all outside of God, which reveals God. For the contingency of the finite universe is the statement of the free benevolence of God. It is that insight, God's free benevolence, which is the foundation of the God-man relation. The Grundidee for Möhler is best expressed in 1 John 4:16, "God is love." It is at that point, God's love revealed in his freedom, that the doctrines of the Trinity, of creation, of incarnation, and of Church can come together. All of those doctrines occupied Möhler in his brief career of fifteen years. For us to attempt to draw their interconnection is to project his thought beyond his work. But one can see that connection drawn explicitly by him between the incarnation and the Church.

Thus Möhler is intent on denying that the Church is simply a "fact" which happens to follow on another "fact," the incarnation. Rather when one affirms the incarnation one implicitly affirms the Church. Initially it may appear that he speaks in terms of suitability. The incarnate Word "spoke as man to man" in "an externally perceptible human way."[1] The goal was to lead men back into full communion with God, and the means chosen in the incarnation corresponded to men's needs. They could only be addressed in a human way.

> This was decisive for the character of those means through which the Son of God after his withdrawal from the eyes of the world would still work in the world and for the world. Since divinity had shown itself active in Christ in an ordinary human way, so with this the form was likewise designated in which his work should be carried forward.

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[1] Ibid.

This seems to indicate that the visible Church is related to the incarnation as the best possible means for the continuance of Christ's work. But Möhler means more. It is true that the nature of the human being demands a particular form of communication, one in which the supernatural can be expressed naturally. So, Christ spoke "as man to men" and, in order to continue his mission, "men must speak to men and communicate with them to bring the Word of God them." But Möhler goes further.

> Thus, from the point of view developed here, the visible Church is the Son of God appearing among men in human form in an on-going fashion, constantly renewed, eternally rejuvenated, his lasting incarnation, just as the faithful are also called in holy scripture the body of Christ.[1]

This is a crucial statement for Möhler's ecclesiology. The visible Church is not merely the best means for the continuance of the work of Christ, which the first edition has categorized as that of prophet, high-priest, and king. The visible Church is the extension of the incarnation. The Church is implicitly contained in the person of Christ.

This statement, found in all editions of Symbolik,[2] is the clearest indication of the pronounced change in the central element of Möhler's ecclesiological thought. For there is a verbal similarity to a statement in Einheit in der Kirche:

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[1] Ibid., 1:389.

[2] There is one change between the first and second editions, which does not alter the meaing: in place of andauernde Leibwerdung in Möhler's Symbolik^1, p. 266, the second and subsequent editions have andauernder Fleischwerdung.

> The totality of the faithful, the Church which he [the divine Spirit] built, exists through the fact that he fills it, he the unconquerable, always renewed and rejuvenated treasure of the principle of new life, the uncreated source of sustenance for all.[1]

The contrast of these two statements, one maintaining that "the visible Church is the Son of God appearing among men in human form," the other that the Church is "built" by the Holy Spirit and "exists through the fact that he fills it," epitomizes the shift in Möhler's theology of the Church from a pneumatocentric to a Christocentric basis. The reason for that shift can best be summarized, in the terms of these two statements written eight years apart, by noting two phrases present in the sentence from Symbolik without equivalents in that from Einheit in der Kirche: "visible" and "in human form." We will indicate shortly the reason that Möhler now regarded the treatment of the Church's visibility in his earlier work to be inadequate. But he has stated that in his mind now the ultimate basis for that visibility is the mystery of the incarnation. The fact that the Son has come "in human form" and that the Church is the continuance of that incarnation throughout time is the ground of the visible Church. Viewed from this perspective, one can see that a non-incarnate relation between the Trinity and mankind could not establish a visible Church. For Möhler has already told us that, if the Son had descended directly into human hearts without himself taking human nature, no visible Church would have been founded. This same point can be observed in the Sabellian doctrine of the Church as it is understood by Möhler in Athanasius der Grosse, basing himself on Schleiermacher's version of Sabellianism. There the Church's appearance among men as a divine reality which is also visible can only be explained by identifying the Gemeingeist of Christians with the Holy Spirit. Quite apart from the inadequately formulated God-man relationship upon which this is grounded, it is noteworthy that it is only by an incarnation of the Spirit that the existence of the Church can be explained. That fundamental insight is correct. An incarnation of the divine is necessary for a divine and human institution to be founded. But the denial of the immanent Trinity by Sabellius-Schleiermacher renders this incarnate principle in ecclesiology untenable. No incarnation of the Spirit is required for there is an incarnation of the Son in Christ. Furthermore, the incarnation of the Spirit, by identifying the spirit of the community with the Spirit of God, makes the maintenance of the divine and the human in the Church impossible. The inevitable slide of panentheism into pantheism will either dissolve the divine into the human or relegate the human to the mere externalization of the divine. It was this which led Möhler, as we saw, to the conviction that the Chalcedonian statement of the incarnation, that the divine and human natures of Christ are inseparable but unconfused, is the basis on which to construct ecclesiology.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 8f.

Thus Möhler immediately expands on his statement in Symbolik:

> From this it now also appears that the Church, although it consists of men, is nevertheless not merely human. Rather, as in Christ the divine and the human are to be distinguished but at the same time both are bound in unity, so he is set forth in undivided wholeness in the Church. The Church, his perduring manifestation, is simultaneously divine and human; it is the unity of both. It is he who works in it, concealed in earthly and human forms. It has, therefore, a divine and a human aspect in an inseparable manner, so that the divine may not be divorced from the human nor the latter from the former.[1]

As divinity could not communicate itself to humanity, because of humanity's finiteness, save in a human way, so the divine in the Church cannot be grasped apart from the human in the Church. One does not look past the humanity of Christ to his divinity which lies behind or beneath the humanity. It is precisely in his human words and deeds that the divine is located. So also one does not seek an invisible Church lying behind the visible, in which the divine life resides. It is precisely the visible, observable Church in which the divine activities of Christ continue.

This is the basis for the communicatio idiomatum between the divine and human in the Church. It is the same basis as that for the interchange of predicates between the divine and human natures of Christ: both are inseparable but distinct. If the divine in the Church, "the living Christ and his Spirit," is infallible, so too is the human visible Church, "because the divine without the human has absolutely no existence for us." Once again, the change from Einheit in der Kirche may be observed. There the interchange of the divine and human attributes of the Church was traced to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "Since oneness, truth, and holiness are gifts of the Holy Spirit, this means that, if he is always in the Church, it too can never cease to be one, holy, and true."[1] This had been possible because Möhler had insisted that the Spirit was present in the Church "essentially."[2] The communicatio idiomatum was possible only between two natures bound in a hypostatic union such as that of the Chalcedonian formula. In 1825, in his explanation of the marks of the Church within a pneumatocentric ecclesiological framework, Möhler had in fact come very close to binding the Spirit and the Church in such a union. He had been perilously near the position which is attacked in Athanasius der Grosse, that of making the Church into the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. The need for an incarnation of the Godhead to ground the divinity of the visible and the visibility of the divine, was correctly perceived. But the incarnation of the divine is Christ, not the Spirit's presence in the Church.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:389. The first edition has used "invisible-visible" for "divine-human"; see Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 267.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 22.

[2] Ibid., p. 5.

In Symbolik, Möhler has insisted that it is the visible Church which is the Son of God in human form. This is an emphasis not found in Einheit in der Kirche. There we observed that one of the uses to which the young Tübingen theologian put his principle of organic community was the interpretation of external forms as externalizations of internal realities. This presumed the priority of the internal invisible Church, if not in time, at least in ontological importance. To be sure, Möhler had written that the new life-principal had been communicated immediately only once to the apostles and thereafter was imparted mediately to all others by engrafting them into the community of believers. It is noteworthy, however, and entirely in keeping with the pneumatocentrism of Einheit in der Kirche that the historical origin of the Church is fixed at Pentecost, not at the incarnation. The descent of the Spirit upon the apostles was accompanied by visible signs, e.g., the tongues of fire, but those signs were mere indications of his presence, not the embodiment of the divine. The event of Pentecost was a descent "into men's hearts without assuming the form of a slave, and so without appearing in a corporeal way at all" in the language of Symbolik. In 1832 Möhler judged that such a descent could have founded "only an invisible, internal Church." In 1825 he had deemed it sufficient grounding for the visible Church that the internally received new life-principle must seek external expression.[1] Certainly others received the new life of Christianity from the now visible community, but even their reception was conditioned by the prior internal reality.

> All the apostles had, after all, received the Holy Spirit together as a group before they proclaimed their internal inspiration, their internal faith, and by all means we will have to say of ourselves as of the apostles that we do not understand the doctrine, the intelligible expression of the new life imparted by the Holy Spirit, until we have experienced the new life-principle itself.[2]

Thus Möhler can speak of the successive generations of those who have been enlivened by the Spirit as joining together and making up one Church.[3] He has stressed that this life of the Holy Spirit is received mediately, i.e., through others already enjoying that life, and that consequently for us the visible, externally existing community is temporally prior. But in Einheit in der Kirche that principle of mediate communication is employed to ground not the visibility of the Church, but its unity. Nor was the visible Church always prior to the internally experienced community of life based upon the Holy Spirit even temporally. It is so for us to whom the new Christian life is conveyed mediately, but was not so for the apostles to whom it came immediately.

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[1] Ibid., p. 23.

[2] Ibid., p. 24.

[3] Ibid., pp. 10f.

For the Möhler of Symbolik, the visibility of the Church could no longer be grounded in the externalization of the ontologically prior inner life of the Spirit dwelling in the believing community. Indeed such a principle now appears to him the very antithesis of Catholic ecclesiological doctrine.

> Now for the first time the differences between the Catholic and Lutheran viewpoints allow themselves to be reduced to a short, adequate, and definite expression. Catholics teach: the visible Church is first, then comes the invisible; the former first builds the latter. Lutherans, on the other hand, say the contrary: the visible proceeds out of the invisible and the latter is the basis of the former.[1]

The basis for the Catholic position is the incarnate Son. When Christ appeared among men, the Kingdom of God existed within him as the perfect embodiment of the God-man relation, and, as we would anticipate a good student of Drey to affirm, "in the divine idea." But that unique relationship existed nowhere else. Man had retained a capacity for it but could not realize that capacity, since its realization would be communication with God and that, of course, could only depend on the divine initiative.[2] Thus the Kingdom of God, the God-man relation established in Christ, the "new life-principle" in the terms of Einheit in der Kirche, "came from outside to men, and of course, first to the apostles in whom the Kingdom of God was founded by the Word of God speaking to them in a human way from outside themselves, so that it penetrated into them from without." By making Pentecost the beginning of the Church and so depicting the communication of the new life of Christianity to the apostles as immediate, Möhler had in his great work of 1825 made even the temporal priority of the visible Church relative. It was prior in time for us to whom the Christian life comes mediately, but not for the apostles. But now, by making the incarnation the Church's origin, he maintains that, to the apostles as to all other members of the Church, the communication of Christianity came from external human signs in which the divine is present, in the apostles' case the words and actions of Christ, in our case the words and actions of the Church. "Through the Son of God become man" and so through an

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:482f.

[2] The revisions of the fifth edition never reached the ecclesiological sections of Symbolik, as has been noted. Consequently the last text which we have from Möhler of these sections is that of the fourth edition of 1835. At that point, as we have seen, he still regarded original justice as a supernatural accident in the same sense as original

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holiness. Thus, he could not yet make room for a natural fulfillment of man's "religious capacity," the imago Dei, leading to a natural knowledge and love of God, apart from a supernatural love which would be the working of grace. Although Möhler here still thinks of man as standing naturally in an "irrational relationship" to his "infinite vocation," the position abandoned in the fifth edition, his remarks throughout these sections hold good since the God-man relation established in Christ and designated as the Kingdom of God is a supernatural gift. The revisions of the earlier sections in the fifth edition clarify but do not in any way negate the positions which he has adopted here.

"external calling," the apostles were brought to faith, and the new God-man relation was communicated to them. Then they in turn went out to communicate it to others. The invisible Church then constantly proceeds from the visible.

This is the critical point, as his summary statement notes, where Möhler sees Catholic and Protestant doctrines on the Church as irreconcilable. Luther's inability to perceive the priority of the visible Church is deeply rooted in his fundamental misunderstanding of the whole God-man relation.

> As little as the Catholic doctrine of the Church can be evaluated unless it is grasped in its organic connection with the other features of Catholic belief, so little success will there be in arriving at a fundamental understanding of the Lutheran notion of the Church if it is viewed in abstraction. The key which opens the insight into the whole issue for us is Luther's theory of the exclusive activity of God in the work of rebirth, his doctrine that faith is solely the work of God, or if one prefers, his metaphysics according to which God alone does everything.[1]

Because the *imago Dei* had been so defaced in the fall, because man's religious capacity was virtually destroyed as a result of Adam's sin, the human being no longer had any ability to respond to God's initiative. Thus the conferral of grace and its reception were equally God's work. This is the one-sided supernaturalism for which he had criticized Luther and Melanchthon in 1830[2] and which had become a principal theme of Symbolik's portrait of classical Protestantism. The Reformers severely undervalued natural receptivity for the supernatural. In subsequent editions Möhler expanded his summary statement concerning the close connections between the Catholic and Protestant doctrines of the Church and the rest of their respective dogmatic systems.

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[1] Möhler, *Symbolik*^{1}, pp. 299f.

[2] Lösch, *J. A. Möhler, Gesammelte Aktenstücke und Briefe*, 1:359.

> We have two sources from which we derive our knowledge of God and divine matters: natural and supernatural revelation. For brevity of expression we choose to put a part for the whole and say: revelation within us and revelation outside us in Christ Jesus. The revelation of God within us is likewise the organ through which we grasp the external revelation, and has therefore a double function, first, itself to give witness to God and our relation to him, and then, to receive the witness coming from outside.[1]

Although Möhler's own way of relating supernature to nature was not entirely satisfactory in the first four editions of Symbolik in that it did not succeed in balancing "supernaturalism" and "rationalism," the terms he had used in 1830, his insistence on the accidental quality of both Adam's justice and holiness nevertheless enabled him always to insist that the capacity for the divine remained in fallen man. Until the revisions of the fifth edition in 1838, when he distinguished justice as a natural accident from holiness as a supernatural accident, he maintained that the image of God in man could not come to knowledge of God and love of him. But the capacity, the openness for divine communication, remained, and that in itself was an internal revelation for man.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:457f.

This is the basis for the twofold function of God's revelation within us of which he writes: the image of God within us enables us to receive God's self-communication, and its receptivity is revelatory. It is, however, important that the internal revelation not be overvalued. It is revelatory precisely by the fact that it stands in need of an external communication. The witnesses of that external communication must be subjected to examination by historical criticism to determine "whether they would rightly perceive the truth and choose to report what they had perceived unchanged." So, too, must the internal witness to revelation be examined to assure ourselves that our very openness to divine communication does not lead us to hear what we want to hear. This may happen all too easily since it is only because of that internal witness, that receptivity, that we are able to grasp revelation from without. This presents a problem in the acceptance of external revelation which is found in no other reception of an external fact. For other external facts are learned only from without. But God's self-communication presents itself not only as a fact with external witnesses but with inner testimony awakened within us. And that latter may distort the former. For this reason a visible Church is needed besides scripture. For scripture alone is subject to the distortion of the inner receptivity of the human being for the word of God, which may shape what comes to it from outside to fit the particular state of development of the image of God within. But the Church as a living ongoing presence of Christ can constantly correct our individual distortions of divine revelation.

For Luther the visible Church is unnecessary because there is no possibility for external revelation to be distorted by the more or less developed religious capacity of the individual. There is no such capacity: the imago Dei had been destroyed by Adam's sin. The reception of external revelation is not due to man's nature but is itself the work of supernature within man. There is consequently no difficulty in regarding scripture as the sole external authority for revelation so long as there is no possibility of the internal witness to God, his image within the human being, deluding us by confining that external testimony to the bounds of its own stage of cultivation. In short, scripture can be made the sum total of the external witness of God so long as we are regarded as "by nature godless."[1] Catholicism sees the visible Church as the necessary guarantee for the individual that he does indeed apprehend external revelation correctly, that his inner receptivity for the divine has matured in accord with God's self-communication, a development made uncertain and laborious by original sin. The Church assures this to the individual by its existence as a community the living of whose life is the measure of certainty regarding one's reception of the truth of revelation.

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[1] Ibid., 1:459.

If one lives in the communion of the visible Church one knows with confidence that what one perceives as revelation is indeed the communication of the divine. For Luther, such an assurance is unnecessary. Nature cannot distort supernature since nature is utterly passive. God receives his own communication within us. Luther "denies all human participation and allows God alone to be active; he says, the Holy Spirit within reads the holy scripture, not you."[1]

Thus the Protestant understanding of the visible and invisible Church, which is, according to Möhler's dictum, that the former proceeds from the latter, is deeply grounded in the heart of the Reformers' way of formulating the God-man relation. That way is an extreme supernaturalism. And the Catholic doctrine of the Church, which maintains that the invisible Church grows out of the visible, is equally deeply grounded in the Catholic understanding of the God-man relation. This is both "supernaturalist" and "rationalist," i.e., it maintains the primacy of God's activity and the real participation of the human. This is the core reason for the movement in Möhler's ecclesiology from pneumatocentrism to Christocentrism. The drive toward an incarnational principle for the doctrine of the Church is present even in Einheit in der Kirche. It led to a theology of the Church which in practice made the believing community the incarnation of the

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[1] Ibid., 1:460.

Holy Spirit and made the Christian Gemeingeist the only Spirit of God in the believer's experience. In doing so, the visible Church became the externalization of the invisible Church. It is this which Möhler combats in Symbolik. The incarnational principle grounding ecclesiology is Christ. By rooting the Church in the incarnation of the Son, the visibility of the Church is explained. Its visible existence is necessary as the continuance of an historical revelation.

The historical nature of the incarnation is in fact closely connected with the existence of a visible Church not simply because it grounds the latter, but because the latter safeguards it. This can be seen clearly in the results of classical Protestantism's rejection of the visible Church as primary.

> Accordingly, since the Reformers explained the participation of the human in the work of salvation not only as unnecessary but as impossible, and maintained that wherever human importunity, with sufficient rashness, forced an entry for itself, a miscarriage would unavoidably result, so the notion was developed that he who only applies himself immediately to Holy Scripture also immediately absorbs its content. They discarded the mediating authority of the Church which directs the activity of the individual because they desired to avoid everything human, without realizing that the subjectivity of the believer could unrestrainedly come into play and exchange itself for the objectively given--indeed without suspecting that anything human at all would be intermixed, because they had repudiated it in their imagination.[1]

Möhler is convinced that the "supernaturalist" extreme of sixteenth-century Protestantism led inevitably to the

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[1] Ibid.

"rationalist" extreme of his Protestant contemporaries. The subjectivity of the human being replaced the objectivity of revelation. Positive historical revelation became the necessary content of human thought. We have observed that a possible opening in that direction had existed for Möhler himself, following his insistence in "Anselm" that the truths of revelation and the truths of reason coincide. Although there is no problem with that affirmation if *a posteriori* coincidence is meant, i.e., if revelation *once revealed* is seen to be intelligible as fact, a problem does arise if the coincidence is understood as *a priori*, i.e., if revelation reveals what is necessary as idea. There is a brief moment, observable in his essay on Islam in 1830, when Möhler seems to move toward such a position. It is precisely that which is now rejected. Subsequently in the relationship of the supernatural and the natural which underlies the last edition of *Symbolik*, Möhler based himself on the freedom of God as the foundation of all revelation. It is God's absolute freedom which makes his activity revelatory. Thus Möhler's final position is the very antithesis of the Hegelian position, and it was from this opposition that his one-time student, Franz Anton Staudenmaier, developed his critique of Hegel.[1] With regard to our concern for ecclesiology,

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[1] See especially, F. A. Staudenmaier, "Kritik der Vorlesungen Hegels über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes," *Jahrbücher für Theologie und christliche Philosophie* (1830), pp. 251-359, and idem, *Darstellung und Kritik des Hegelschen*

Möhler, from the very first appearance of Symbolik in 1832, saw that an external revelation required a visible Church as its continuance.

> This order [i.e., the priority of the visible over the invisible Church] is required by the concept of an external historical revelation, whose whole proper nature demands a continuous, definite, external teaching office to which anyone must adhere who wants to become acquainted with this revelation. Through its witness, thus through an external witness, external revelation is preserved in its truth, purity, and entirety.[1]

This was the central point at issue when Baur attacked Möhler's laying-out of Catholic and Protestant views of the Church. Baur roundly assaulted Möhler's summary of the Lutheran position, that the visible Church proceeds out of the invisible, especially when it is contrasted with the Catholic position, that the invisible Church rests upon and grows out of the visible.

> The whole conceptual misunderstanding in which the author [i.e., Möhler] is involved, had necessarily to occur through the fact that two simple concepts, priority of time and priority of intrinsic importance, are confused, while, indeed, even a "completely childish" glance could have shown that what is first with regard to time need not also be first absolutely, according to its intrinsic meaning.[2]

Systems. Aus dem Standpunkte der christlichen Philosophie (Mainz, 1844).

[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 320. The statement, with slight verbal clarification in the second sentence (that the "external witness" is that of the teaching office spoken of in the previous sentence), remains intact in all subsequent editions; see Möhler, Symbolik, 1:483.

[2] Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus, pp. 321f.

From this confusion, Baur believes, Möhler has been led to conclude that since the invisible Church is primary and most essential for Luther, it is likewise first in time in his view. If this obviously nonsensical position is to be credited to Luther, then one can discover any number of other preposterous notions which are also supposedly espoused by him, e.g., "There is, for Luther, no Christian teaching-office, and no sacrament of ordination, the Kingdom of God does not come from without and so there is also no external revelation, no historical Christ, no incarnation of the Word, but only a Christian consciousness and an immediate divine instruction." No one could possibly deny that the Kingdom of God announced by Christ came to man from outside himself, that it was taught by the apostles to their disciples and that little by little the invisible Church thus proceeded forth from the visible. No Protestant could hold that one comes to the knowledge of Christianity in any way other than through external mediation. This is nothing more nor less than "the one principle which from the beginning Protestants have exalted as the highest, that only the Gospel and the holy scripture are the objective source of the knowledge of Christian truth."[1] Möhler's statement of the basic ecclesiological difference between Protestantism and Catholicism falls apart. Differences there are, but on this point the two Christian doctrinal systems are at one.

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[1] Ibid., p. 323.

Here, according to Möhler, Baur has put his finger on the decisive element and still managed to miss the point. In his response to Baur, Möhler points out that his adversary's dismissal of his formula in Symbolik hinges on the claim that Protestantism, like Catholicism, recognizes that not only in the historical spread of the Church, but in the religious development of every individual member of the Church, an external proclamation of revelation is temporally prior. Consequently, Baur thinks, there is no real difference between the confessions on this question. This means that Baur equates a community of persons commissioned by Christ, preserved and protected by him, endowed by him to commission others in the same way, with a book. The Bible equals the visible Church. This is what Baur means when he claims that Protestants and Catholics alike recognize the temporal priority of an external revelation.[1] What is more, the Catholic position is not only that the visible Church is temporally prior to the invisible. The Catholic doctrine is that the visible Church is ontologically prior to the invisible Church, in Baur's terms, first "absolutely, according to its intrinsic meaning." Baur himself must recognize that there is a real difference here, for he ends up in a position in which he must say of Luther that

> his spirit drove him to do as he did; the way in which the Gospel was reflected in his innermost life deter-

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen, pp. 450-451.

> mined him to rise up against the existing visible Church and so to build a new ecclesiastical world out of the invisible one dawning within him.[1]

By contrast with this position, the Catholic position is that

> Christ has founded a visible Church, and commissioned it with the preservation and spread of his word, his entire economy of salvation, and with this commission promised also to it his protection and his strength so that it may be carried out, while Protestants deny the foundation of a visible Church by Christ with such commissions and powers, although they admit that, if a new idea culled from the bible by a creative mind makes itself current and wins adherents, then these must unite in a visible communion.

But by reducing all external revelation to the text of scripture Baur cannot escape the problem which confronted the Reformers: how can the individual know that what he understands scripture to proclaim is in fact that which it does proclaim? For Luther that had been solved by his contention that the word of God came to the human being as something utterly foreign, since man was without any natural receptivity for it. That the human being could apprehend it at all was the work of supernature. For Baur and his contemporaries the question can only be solved by making scripture totally dependent upon the hermeneutical expertise of the interpreter. In practice, for most Protestants, this means that, even while claiming to preach nothing but scripture itself, they proclaim scripture as interpreted by the Reformers. As a matter of fact, now, Möhler writes, it most often means they preach the word of God as mediated by Wegscheider and Gesenius, by Bretschneider and Röhr, by Paulus, or by Schleiermacher and Hegel.[1] In the second and subsequent editions of Symbolik, in his expanded introductory remarks to the ecclesiological sections, the claim of any religious community to follow the pure doctrine of scripture while condemning the visible Church is dismissed.

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[1] Ibid., p. 452.

> History teaches us that holy scripture has never enjoyed outside the Church, from the most ancient Gnostic of Egypt down to the two general superintendants of Weimar and Gotha, Herr Röhr and Herr Bretschneider, the respect to which it must lay claim among Christians, i.e., absolutely to form through its content the spirit of their thought. Rather it was always a matter of opinions conceived before hand and apart from Christianity, according to which the authority of scripture, the degree of that authority, and the style and manner of it use, were judged, even if one did not so openly and readily declare himself on this, as those mentioned above.[2]

In short, outside the visible Church, revelation inevitably becomes purely subjective.

Christ himself had confronted this. He interpreted the prophecies of the Old Testament in one way and the Jewish authorities in another. The decisive ground was whether one or the other could claim the authority of the One who revealed himself. It was precisely this which Christ did claim by directing his hearers' attention to the power of God manifested in him. "If you do not believe my words, believe my works." Thus Christ claimed for himself the objective interpretation of scripture and showed that his opponents' understanding was purely subjective.[1] Revelation depends upon the person who reveals. His authority grounds that of his revelation. "The tradition of an external revelation is necessarily bound by the same laws under which the revelation was given."[2] The authority of revelation stands or falls on the authority of the revealer: that is the "law" governing external revelation. Its application to the continuing transmission of external revelation means that the authority of an interpretation must rest upon the authority of the interpreter and, if that authority is to be objective, it must

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[1] Ibid., pp. 476f.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:385. Möhler refers his reader to Johann Friedrich Röhr's Briefe über den Rationalismus (Aachen, 1813). There the author places himself among the rationalists, who are described as those among whom reason alone is the decisive arbiter in matters of faith and in doctrinal formulae. Möhler quotes him: "Scripture is to him

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nothing more than any other human book. He gives it sway only where it is in agreement with his own convictions, and certainly not as the decisive basis for them since they are true because of their rational proofs, but rather only as an illustration that others also--wise men of the past--have similarly thought and believed."

For Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider's opinions on scriptural authority, Möhler cites the Lutheran theologian's Der St. Simonism und das Christentum (Leipzig, 1832), in which he had written: "Not only is the interpretation of scripture to be submitted to science, but scripture's content, mediated by scriptural interpretation, is to be judged according to science." Möhler adds: "This is more precisely stated as follows: the sum of all the truths which the sciences in general, both the metaphysical as well as the empirical, have brought forth as their common possession to date, or may still bring forth, is the standard of judgment for the biblical content.--What accordingly is God for Herr Bretschneider? And what will he yet be?"

[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen, pp. 453ff.

[2] Ibid., p. 455.

come to the interpreter from the revealer. This is why a visible Church founded and commissioned by Christ alone can claim an objective interpretation of scripture.

But, for Möhler's contemporaries, more is at stake than the objectivity of the interpretation of particular passages of scripture. For if there is no objective interpretation, at length the objectivity of revelation must dissolve. The objective, historical, external revelation becomes a subjective, evolutionary, internal revelation. This is the result of the reformation, although it was certainly not the intent of the Reformers. It is this which Möhler charges against Baur, but beyond him against the Protestant theologians of his time. We have seen how the critique of Schleiermacher's panentheism in 1827 produced several key moments of a theology which finds expression in the editions of Symbolik. Those moments are all subsumed under the search for a new formulation of the God-man relation which will protect the integrity of both the divine and human. As part of that search, Möhler turned from a pneumatocentric to a Christocentric ecclesiology in which the incarnation is seen as the ground of the Church's existence and the model of its form. We have also seen Möhler's insistence from the very first edition of Symbolik that redemption must be understood as the restoration of man to his original condition in the God-man relation, not as the foundation of a totally new stage in that relation or as the previously unattained perfection of the creation.[1] Failing such an understanding, one will be inexorably led to a progressive evolution of the God-man relation which, even if one struggles valiantly, as did Schleiermacher, who attempted to preserve God's transcendence even to the extent of jettisoning any immanent relations in the Godhead and limiting the Trinity to its economic meaning, will finally embrace both poles of the relation. Thus creation will become the necessary expression of God, the material of his evolution. Schleiermacher attempted at all costs to preserve the absolute and utter aseity of God and yet make him the solely active pole of a relationship. The effort had been brilliant, Möhler fully recognized, and it was this which led him to affirm that "with all his variations on particular points, Schleiermacher is to me the only true disciple of the Reformers."[2] But it was also precisely here that the great Berlin theologian and his great colleague and critic on the philosophy faculty, Hegel, came together for Möhler. Schleiermacher could not maintain his panentheism. It would slide into pantheism and he and Hegel must end up on the same ground. Bit by bit the absoluteness of the objective historical revelation would disappear. It would be subsumed into the evolution of religious consciousness.

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[1] It is not, however, until the fifth edition that Möhler can indicate how, in the God-man relation, humanity, and so creation, can have a purely natural perfection, i.e., one that does not demand a divine intervention beyond the act of creation itself. Thus it is only in the edition of Symbolik published in the last year of his life and still incomplete at his death that Möhler found himself fully able to work through this idea of Schleiermacher's, which he had found "beautiful" but inadequate even in 1825; see Möhler, Einheit, p. 27, n. 6.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:302. The remark is found in all editions.

This can be seen in Möhler's reply to Baur. How can Baur establish communal agreement on the truth of a doctrine? The question cannot be answered, "By appeal to scripture," for that simply moves the question to the next level: how can a community establish its understanding of scripture to be true? The authority of a visible Church is uncompromisingly excluded.

> According to the Protestant concept of the Church, the true Church is invisible; it is uniquely a community of saints and coincides with the visible Church only through certain external signs and marks. Consequently there is no visible Church which could make claim to be the exclusive source of blessing, save in so far as it contains the objective means and conditions of blessedness. But since communion with such a Church, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly conferred, still does not make him who belongs to it into a true member of the true Church, so this communion always has only an external value and there absolutely cannot be for individuals a definite authority which proceeds from the external visible Church. The totality of the members who make up the visible Church cannot supply such an authority, since, as in the case of each individual, so in the case of all together, it is completely uncertain whether they, as members of the visible Church, are also members of the true Church. The authority of the visible Church is thence always only a human, fallible one, to which the individual cannot submit unconditionally in matters of faith without danger of error.[1]

Möhler distinguishes two ways in which Baur finally does try to resolve the problem of establishing communal assent to the truth of religious doctrine. "The first is of a purely historical nature; the second is historical-speculative."[1] The "historical" demonstration which Baur advances is intended actually as an illustration of the soundness of Protestant ecclesial principles. He insists that the Protestant principle of freedom can be preserved while at the same time maintaining unity among believers. Whenever force has been used to achieve unity among Protestants, it has proved self-defeating, for it stands in flat contradictions to that fundamental tenet of freedom in matters of faith. On the other hand, whenever it has appeared that separatist sentiment has ruled supreme, the "healthy life" of the Church has reasserted itself and begun the movement toward unity. Thus, Baur argues, one need never fear that "the knowledge of Christian truth and the study of the true meaning of scripture could ever become so vacillating and doubtful that unity and community of faith would be completely impossible."[2]

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[1] Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus, pp. 328f.

To this Möhler responds by pointing to "two great crises" through which Protestantism has gone. The first manifested itself in Lutheranism as synergism, in Calvinism as Arminianism, and centered on the question of human freedom. This crisis pointed to a deep contradiction within the

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen, p. 480.

[2] Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus, p. 331.

Reformation: "To be sure it erected the principle of individual interpretation of scripture, but it permitted its use to no one save the Reformers and those who were entirely immersed in the individuality of the Reformers."[1] Protestantism held together only by denying its own principles. Its unity was preserved precisely by denying the freedom of those who disagreed on the meaning of the bondage of the will. The second great crisis continues in Baur's own work. The insistence of the Reformers that man has been despoiled of the image of God within him and consequently that the Spirit of God alone is active in the rebirth of redemption has, by an inversion, become the divinization of man "who fashions his God for himself and his law out of himself." This is the triumph of subjectivity which must lead to conflict between man who has been exclusively cast back upon his subjectivity, and the objective revelation of Christ. This is the great contradiction which the one-sided supernaturalism of the Reformers has produced.

The triumph of subjectivity is the lesson to be learned, according to Möhler, from Baur's second way of resolving the problem of determining religious truth: schism and doctrinal dispute are to be regarded as moments in the more perfect realization of the idea of the Church. Möhler understands this to mean that "out of oppositions a higher unity always proceeds once again," and is willing to grant the truth of such a view with one provision added: "The character of the members of an opposition will always be the character of the unity as well."[1] This, he explains, simply means that if the thesis and antithesis are the results of human knowledge and investigative skill, then the synthesis mediated by them must be regarded as a scientific conclusion, i.e., a product of human knowledge and dialectical ability. That synthesis will become the thesis of a new opposition which will bring about a still higher synthesis "and so on into infinity." This is the history of the speculative sciences. But from this provision an important conclusion follows: "One never attains in this fashion to an authority on which the faith of Christians rests, i.e., to no (true, positive) faith." Christianity rests on the revelation of Christ, who did not arise out of the process of human development, but was sent into it.

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchung, p. 484.

> The development advanced through oppositions consequently never transcends the quality of knowledge possible in this fashion, i.e., it is impossible that pure knowledge could ever pass over into positive divine faith because this latter is of entirely different origin and entirely different nature. It requires subjection to an authority, which does not exist for pure science.[2]

Two elements of great importance lie behind this statement. The first is the principle which Möhler relies upon for demonstrating the need for a visible teaching authority once one accepts the incarnation. It is the fact that one cannot arrive at an historical event by a process of reasoning alone. External testimony is the necessary condition for knowledge of contingent facts. As Möhler himself says, in another context: "That Carthage was captured by Scipio Aemilianus is known to us only through ancient historians, and our own internal processes of thought give us not the slightest hint of it."[1] When he employed that example, however, he went on to draw a distinction between the knowledge of historical events, such as the fall of Carthage, and the knowledge of revelation. For the latter has a corresponding receptivity within the human being, the imago Dei, which can affect the perception of revelation. It is for this reason that a visible Church is needed in addition to the scripture. And this leads to the second important element underlying Möhler's critical conclusion regarding Baur's "historical-speculative" attempt to ground unity of doctrine as a possibility within an ecclesiology which undervalues the visibility of the Church. The activity of the human spirit can never yield the certitude of faith because faith "is of entirely different origin and entirely different nature." But man has a natural openness, a natural ordering, toward divine communication, the fulfillment of which must always remain God's free act. This is the tension in the God-man relation of the first four editions of Symbolik and Neue Untersuchungen which remained unresolved until the fifth edition of 1838. Here it is present beneath Möhler's response to Baur in the tacit corollary that man, although he may even be aware of the need for revelation, can never posit that revelation as a fact, that indeed he is aware of its need precisely as revelation, i.e., communication from without.

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[1] Ibid., p. 480.

[2] Ibid., p. 481.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:459.

So Möhler concludes that Protestantism can never achieve unity of belief, for its synthetic unity will always become the breeding ground of another antithesis. It will certainly never attain to unity in the faith of Christ because it wants by means of "always progressive speculative knowledge" to attain to "the regressive movement to faith in an historical fact."

> Herr Baur's fundamental error consists in the fact that he says that Christian doctrine can be discovered through the process, whereas we maintain through this process that we are able only to investigate more deeply the doctrine already communicated and known (through authority and always and everlastingly through authority), to penetrate it, to appropriate it from all angles, and to receive it ever more clearly into our consciousness. This is the task of the science of the Christian religion, which does not seek authority but begins from it. Faith is itself the eternal precondition of all Christian knowledge, and a Christian theologian who intends to discover it by way of scientific opposition is going in circles. Likewise with a church, i.e., it misses the point.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen, p. 482. It is interesting to note that Möhler gives an indication here of how he understands his interpretation of the function of heresy in the Church to differ from Baur's interpretation of the function of schism. I suggest that once again Möhler's choice of the living organism as an explanatory framework rather than the expanding idea serves him well. We saw earlier in Chapter 2

Whether or not Baur wants to admit it, he has put himself in the position of denying the absoluteness of the revelation of Christ. For his progressive oppositions are precisely that--progressive. The fullness of truth lies in the future. "Perfect truth has not already been revealed in Christ, but is rather always more fully to be revealed in the concept, which conflicts with his presupposition that in Christ God has become man." Baur cannot avoid this. Since the incarnation, which is the perfection of external revelation, is the beginning of the visible Church, to deny one is to deny the other. "In other words, to place truth in the invisible Church alone means, as a consequence, to reject an external revelation."[1]

An "Upward" or "Rationalist" Complement: the Expanded Ecclesiology of the Second Edition (1833)

One detects in the ecclesiological sections of Neue Untersuchungen a somewhat different approach to the visibility of the Church from that taken in section 32 of the first edition of Symbolik. In Symbolik Möhler rooted the visible Church in the incarnation. Taking a complementary approach in the response to Baur, he reversed the argument and strove to demonstrate that, without the visible Church,

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that it enabled him to avoid the problems in which Drey had found himself embroiled.

[1] Ibid., p. 48.

one lost the basis for belief in the incarnation and ended by negating all external revelation. This difference of approach to the visible Church had appeared, even before Möhler's reply to his Protestant critic in Tübingen, in the second edition of Symbolik in 1833.

Reconciliation of the Visible Church and Personal Piety: the Problem of Einheit

There, in the course of an expansion of earlier portions of the text, the first edition's section 32 became section 36 and a lengthy, totally new section 37 was added, simply entitled "Fuller account of the attitude of Catholics toward the Church." The account is indeed much fuller, five times longer than the original section 32. But, far more important, this new ecclesiological section is not merely an elaboration of what had been contained in the first edition. Rather, it represents the complementary approach which was continued in Neue Untersuchungen the following year. Through it Möhler was able to turn his attention once again to the concerns with which he had been occupied in Einheit in der Kirche, and to indicate how they might be served by this Christocentric understanding of the Church.

In 1825, Möhler's problem was to mediate between a living, affective Christian piety and the visible historical Church. The former ran the risk of becoming privatized and separatist; the latter appeared institutionalized and deadening. There we saw that Möhler took, as the means of mediation, the organic understanding of community. By so doing, he divided Einheit in der Kirche into two parts corresponding to the two moments of his ecclesiology: first, to identify the locus of the Holy Spirit as the community rather than the individual, second, to view the external forms of the Church as the externalization of the community. The difficulties which Möhler perceived in the panentheist underpinnings of this ecclesiology had led him to set out on the path that we have followed through Athanasius der Grosse to Symbolik. But the problem to which he had addressed himself in 1825 remained a real question: how was the individual believer to see his own spiritual life related to that of the community? The Church as a visible institution continuing through time was the necessary organ for the transmission of revelation. But in what way were those who heard that revelation and who accepted it, who were regenerated and established in communion with God through Christ, related to one another as a community? Were they merely the collectivity of those who heard? Did the response and acceptance of one materially affect the life of another?

From one perspective it can be seen that this is to ask not simply about the Church's visibility, but about its humanity.[1] Certainly the first edition of Symbolik had elaborated its ecclesiology from the basis of the manifestation of the divine in the human in the incarnation. Möhler had carefully prepared the grounding of the Church's visibility in the need for a revelation which would be visible. God had to communicate himself to man in human terms. Christ's activity "was adapted to general methods of education and teaching conditioned by the nature and requirements of man."[1] But little had been said about that nature and those needs. The ecclesiology of the first edition of Symbolik had been developed, to use the terms which are familiar from Möhler's letter to his brother in 1830, from the "supernaturalist" side, and had not made use of the grounding for the visible Church to be found in a consideration of the human response to revelation. This is not surprising in light of the development we have observed between the formulations of the God-man relation in the first and the fifth editions. The attempt to balance the perspectives in laying out this ecclesiology in the second edition, by complementing the presentation which begins from the activity of the divine in the human with a presentation which starts from the openness of the human to such activity, is a step toward the understanding of the interplay of the supernatural and the natural found in Symbolik's fifth edition and in the Church history lectures of the 1837-1838 winter semester in Munich. We have seen how Möhler's developing views on the God-man relation altered his ecclesiology. This is the point at which his ecclesiological concerns helped to alter his formulation of the divine-human relationship.

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[1] It was in the expansion of the second edition that the heading of the first section of the fifth chapter was altered from "Invisibility and visibility of the Church" to "Interpenetration of the divine and human in it."

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 266.

To view the questions posed above regarding the visible Church from another perspective, we may observe that the "supernaturalist" bias of the first edition can be seen in the brief outline of the ecclesiological sections which Möhler had included in that first edition but omitted from the later.[1] It will be remembered that he proposed to discuss the Church's nature, its activity, and the means which it possessed for the attainment of its ends. He had distinguished three elements within the second point, the activity of the Church. Since the Church is the extension of the incarnation, its activities are the activities of Christ: prophetic, high-priestly, and royal. Because the explanation of the latter two belong to the Church in its prophetic or teaching office, he proposed to subsume the priestly and kingly functions under that first operation of teaching. Thus a very large portion of the presentation of the doctrine of the Church is given over to the Church as bearer of revelation and the means of that revelation's communication, i.e., scripture and tradition. When he turns to the hierarchy as means possessed by the Church to pursue its activities, Möhler restricts himself to the teaching office. Had he been willing to take up the priestly role of Christ and therefore the priestly work of the Church, he would have had to confront the question of worship which would necessarily have raised the issue of the human response to divine initiative in the first edition. The questions which we have raised and to which Möhler turned his attention in the second edition could not have escaped his notice in the first.

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[1] Ibid., p. 265.

Several alterations were made in the original section 32 at the time of the second edition, among which was the addition of a few lines to connect that section with the new one to follow. Originally Möhler had written:

> The preaching of his doctrine now required a visible human means and had to be entrusted to visible messengers teaching and educating according to the usual way; men must speak to men and communicate with them to bring the Word of God to them.[1]

Now, a year later, he added to the sentence:

> . . . and as among human beings every great undertaking prospers only in community, so Christ too established such a community, and his divine word, his living will, and the love flowing from him, exerted an inner unifying power on those who were his own, so that an inclination planted by him in the heart of believers answered to his external directive; with this, a living interconnected union of these persons, apparent to the eye, arose and it could be said: there they are, there is his Church, his institution in which he lives on, in which his Spirit works on, and in which the word proclaimed by him forever resounds.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 266.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:388f.

In this addition to his original first ecclesiological section, Möhler has, for the first time in his treatment of the Church in Symbolik, specifically included embodiment in a community among the necessary notes of a revelation geared to the needs of human nature. Obviously it was implicit in all of his statements in the first edition. But now it is clearly affirmed that "every great undertaking prospers only in community." Further, that community is founded not only by the word of Christ coming to men from the outside, but also by the "inclination" shared by all believers. Christ has poured an inner yearning into the hearts of those who accept him, a yearning which leads them to community. This sounds much more like Einheit in der Kirche than anything which was heard in the first edition.

That echo becomes even more striking at the beginning of section 37, the lengthy new section.

> After the time fixed by Christ for the sending of the Spirit had arrived, he communicated himself to the apostles and the other disciples when they were gathered in one place and also with one desire (homothumadon) were longing for him; not while one dwelt here, the other there, in some hiding-place. Indeed, they were expressly counselled to wait for him, assembled together in Jerusalem (Acts 1,4). Finally, the promised Holy Spirit appeared; he took on an external form, that of fiery tongues, an image of his power which purifies hearts from every evil and so unites them in love. He chose not to come merely internally as if he intended to support an invisible community, but rather, just as the Word had become flesh, so too he came in a way perceptible to the senses and among powerful, sensibly observable occurrences, like the wind of a storm.[1]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 390f.

This passage is of interest for two reasons: first, because it is unlike anything we have seen in the first edition and its Pentecost-orientation is immediately reminiscent of Einheit in der Kirche; and second, because there are marked differences from the 1825 work even in these few lines. Three points of difference are especially notable. The Spirit is, beyond any question, subordinate to Christ in the life of the Church. It is his Spirit; it is he who promises the Spirit; it is he who appoints the time and place of his coming; it is he who sends him. And when the Spirit descends, he does so in accord with the pattern fixed by the incarnation of the Word. The centrality of Christ remains constant even in the event of Pentecost. Second, the pattern set by the incarnation leads Möhler to insist on the external signs of the Spirit's mission, e.g., the tongues of flame, the rushing wind. The Spirit is not sent to an interior community and so cannot come in an externally imperceptible fashion. This is not to be a community which grows from within, one in which the invisible holds priority. Finally, the Spirit does not come to found the community but to support it. The community exists prior to Pentecost. Its assembly is not the work of the Spirit drawing the members together. Rather, the community has assembled at the command of Christ and once assembled, the Spirit comes to it.

It is interesting to observe Möhler's inclusion that the community had "one desire," eines Gemütes, and that they were longing for the Spirit's coming. There is no possible question here of the Holy Spirit's identification with the Christian Gemeingeist or Gemeingefühl, for that common spirit existed before his descent. It was the result of Christ's promise and command. The Christian Gemeingeist is the work of Christ. The "longing," the "desire," of the assembled disciples suggests also the relationship of the imago Dei to its fulfillment. Christ has led his followers to the conscious desire for holiness, i.e., communion with God and, by the gift of his Spirit, satisfies that desire. Although Möhler does not deal in the categories of his 1825 work in Symbolik, I think it not unjustified to see an indication here of the much more careful sorting-out of divine initiative and human response in the God-man relation which Möhler has accomplished between Einheit and the 1833 edition of Symbolik and which found its final statement in the last edition. The Christian Gemeingeist is not the Spirit of God himself, nor even the work of the Spirit. That Christian communal spirit is, rather, the human response to God's revelation. It is the awakened religious capacity of the human being, now activated and directed by the word of Christ. The sending of the Holy Spirit does not create the Gemeingeist, it answers it. That sending is the free fulfillment by God of his free promise in Christ. The Gemeingeist or Gemeingefühl is fully human, even though impossible without the revelation of God. This is the recovery, from a highly nuanced angle, of the traditional appropriation of the works of salvation to the Son and sanctification to the Spirit. The recovery of justice for man, i.e., the completion of the image of God in man, its growth to full similitude or likeness, the quickening and ordering of man's openness to the divine, the birth of his longing for communion with God, is the work of Christ. This is not merely the longing which accompanies the "faith of reason," the natural love of God of which we will hear in the letter to Bautain written two years later. This is rather the love born of faith in Christ, which is itself a divine gift.[1]

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[1] Thus this does not lose its force in light of the position espoused in the revised sections of the fifth edition, that the human being, on the basis of the first or primitive revelation, i.e., creation, can come to a natural knowledge (Vernunftglaube) and natural "love" of God. For Möhler, at the same time as he added section 37 in the 1833 edtion, also added two sections, now 17 and 18, in which he clarified the relationship of divine faith and love.

The Tridentine formulation of justification by faith lays emphasis on what appears to be an intellectualist notion of faith. The question is left unresolved how the intellectual grasp of an external reality can work an internal regeneration; see Möhler, Symbolik[1], pp. 110ff. In the new sections of the second edition Möhler treats the problem by the typically romantic expansion of a moment into a process. The faith which comes from hearing, the appropriation of the externally proclaimed Gospel, awakens man's longing, his nostalgia for God, which is rooted in the imago Dei. That longing is what makes faith real and blossoms in love. It is an organicist approach to fides formata. This love is the internal regeneration of the new creation. This is what the faith of reason could not accomplish; see Möhler, Symbolik, 1:206ff.

The bestowal of holiness, i.e., the establishment of communion with God is the activity of the Spirit. This is, of course, mere appropriation, for the establishment of communion between the divine and the human is realized first in Christ, which is why he is empowered to send the Spirit.[1]

What has been retained from 1825 and introduced in Symbolik in this opening passage of section 37 is the insistence on the community as the locus of the Spirit's activity. It was not "while one dwelt here, the other there" that the Spirit came upon the believers, but when they were assembled. It is the combination of this theme and the new stress on the visibility of the Spirit's coming in accord with the visible nature of a Church founded upon the incarnational principle which Möhler develops. Man can be united interiorly with Christ only under external conditions and in community. The sacraments themselves are such outward conditions. They are "sensible signs and evidences of the invisible gifts joined to them."[2] And the sacraments must be celebrated in community, e.g., no one can baptize himself. Furthermore, what does baptism do? It does not establish a bond between Christ and the individual alone; it also introduces that individual into a community. "Baptism is the introduction into the Church, acceptance into the community of believers, and confers both the privilege and also the obligation to share in their sorrows and joys forever." The administration of the sacraments was entrusted by Christ to the apostles and to those whom they would so charge. Thus, once again, through participation in the sacraments the individual believer is joined to the hierarchical structure and so to the whole community. If one is united with Christ, he is also united with the Church--a familiar principle from Einheit in der Kirche. Möhler's answer to the problem of relating the spiritual life of the individual and the forms of the ecclesiastical structure is the same as it had been in 1825: the realm of divine activity is the community. But, as we have seen, that principle is now set in a different context.

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[1] This suggested foundation for Möhler's comments at the opening of section 37 both explains and finds support in a statement included in the revised conclusion of the previous section in the second and subsequent editions: "In and through the Church the redemption proclaimed by Christ has attained reality by means of his Spirit," ibid., 1:389.

[2] Ibid., 1:391.

In once again addressing himself to the interpenetration of personal piety and communal forms, accomplished by locating continuing divine activity primarily in the community, Möhler also necessarily centers his interest on the suitability of the Catholic doctrine of the Church to the human condition. The original section 32, now 36, had demonstrated the need of a visible Church as a continuance of the incarnation. Now Möhler demonstrates its suitability for the human being. The complementary nature of these two approaches can be seen in the remarks on the infallibility of the visible Church found in the two sections. We have already observed how infallibility in the first ecclesiological section of Symbolik is a consequence of the communicatio idiomatum. The Church is the extension of the incarnation; as the divine and human are inseparable but unconfused in the latter, so also in the former. As the predicates of the divine and human in Christ can be interchanged, so too the predicates of the divine and human in the Church, or the invisible and visible in the terms of the first edition, can be exchanged. If the divine element in the Church, "the living Christ and his Spirit," is infallible, so too is the human element infallible.[1] The attribute of the visible Church is shown to be a consequence of the incarnational principle, of the entry of the divine into the human. In section 37, the complementary argument is advanced: the Church must be infallible if it is indeed the true Church for only such an institution answers humanity's need.

> Since the individual worshipper of Christ is incorporated into the Church by indissoluble bonds and is led by that fact to the Saviour and remains in him to the extent that he remains in it, he is formed by the Church with regard to his faith and his life. He must put his whole confidence in it and it must likewise deserve that confidence. Entrusting himself to it, he should as a result not be led astray: it must be inerrable.[2]

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[1] Ibid., 1:389; Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 267.

[2] Ibid., 1:392.

Correspondence between the Church and Human Capacities

This argumentation *quoad nos* is followed out systematically in the rest of this section newly added in the second edition. In demonstrating how the Catholic conception of the Church responds to the needs of the human being, Möhler is also explaining how the community subsumes the spirituality of the individual. He seeks not only to complement the "supernaturalist" or downward ecclesiology of the previous section, i.e., moving from the incarnate Son to the visible Church, with a "rationalist" or upward ecclesiology, i.e., moving from human needs and possibilities to the visible Church, but also to resolve within his Christocentric ecclesiology the tension between personal spiritual life and historical community as he had earler attempted to do within his pneumatocentric ecclesiology. The very framework of the argument is established by his anthropology. He relates the Catholic understanding of the Church to the fulfillment of man's faculties of sensibility, reason, and will. The needs and highest realization of each of those faculties is seen to be attained in the Church.

Aesthetic Sensibility: the Church as a Work of Art

The core of Möhler's presentation of the Church as satisfying man's sensibility, "his feelings and power of imagination," is indicated when he asks why anyone should deem it strange that Catholics regard the Church with joyful awe, when "philosophers of art tell us that the beautiful is the manifestation and embodiment of truth."[1] Here Möhler, who has previously defined the Church as "the Christian religion objectivized"[2] in that the redemption proclaimed by Christ has found reality in it, takes the romantic notion of religion as art and incorporates it into his ecclesiology.

The close relation of religion and art is a common theme of the first decades of the nineteenth century. It rests on the conviction which lies at the heart of the whole romantic frame of mind, that a dimension beyond this world is at work in human feeling.[3] Art reveals this world which is transcendent to the empirical world and yet immanent in man. Obviously this is closely connected to religion. In fact, the two, art and religion, have exactly the same object, to mediate to man the transcendent within him; they differ only in means of expression. The Schleiermacher of the Reden über die Religion had written from within this current of thought. Indeed so much was he immersed in it that his attempt to chart an area of human experience proper to religion seemed to some simply arbitrary. The very success of his apologetic for religion in addressing the "cultured despisers" in their own terms gave rise to such a criticism. For what the future giant of the theological faculty of Berlin promised his readers they would discover by following him into the depths of the human spirit, the unique domain of religion, is precisely what others saw as the goal of art: "Throughout any completed work of art we feel our own inner connection with the universe."[1] Friedrich Schlegel had disagreed with Schleiermacher about the distinction of religion from philosophy and ethics and especially about the attribution of different realms to religion and to poetry. There was an irreligious strain in the Reden, Schlegel wrote, because its author "had not entirely grasped the living harmony of the various elements of culture and humanity's capabilities, a harmony in which they divinely merge and emerge."[2] Religion for Schlegel is not one element in human culture, just as it is not one faculty within man; it is "the center of everything."[3]

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[1] Ibid., 1:394.

[2] Ibid., 1:389.

[3] See P. Kluckhohn, Das Ideengut der deutschen Romantik, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1961), pp. 158ff., a most valuable study.

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[1] Philipp Otto Runge, quoted in Kluckhohn, ibid., p. 160. Runge (1777-1870), painter and poet, was a protégé of Ludwig Tieck who regarded him as the romantic painter par excellence. He was himself an aesthetic theorist who exerted considerable influence on the artists of his generation who outlived his own brief life-span.

[2] Schlegel, Athenaeum, 1:298.

[3] Schlegel, "Ideen," Athenaeum, no. 34, 3-1:20.

Poetry and philosophy are only different forms of religion.[1] Nevertheless, Schlegel was enthusiastic about the Reden, though not necessarily for reasons its author liked. His criticism was addressed not to the direction which Schleiermacher had taken, but to what he deemed the latter's inconsistency in not pursuing that path to the end.[2] Novalis had only the highest praise for the Reden. As Schlegel told Schleiermacher, Novalis "finds no fault in you and is totally in agreement with you."[3] That agreement rested on Novalis's particular interpretation of the Reden which overlooked the "inconsistencies" which his friend Schlegel found worrisome and saw Schleiermacher's aestheticization of religion to be in complete accord with his own transcendentalization of art. Thus he could write of the common origin of priests and poets. For primitive man, according to Novalis, had regarded the priest, the poet, and the king equally as figures touched by the divine, who could give access to that world beyond which he sensed within himself.

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[1] Ibid., no. 46, 3-1:23.

[2] See Jack Forstman, A Romantic Triangle: Schleiermacher and Early German Romanticism, American Academy of Religion Studies in Religion 13 (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), pp. 86-92.

[3] Undated letter from Friedrich Schlegel to Schleiermacher, in Friedrich Schleiermacher, Aus Schleiermachers Leben in Briefen, 3 vols., ed. Ludwig Jonas and Wilhelm Dilthey (Berlin, 1861), 3:125.

And "the true poet has always remained a priest."[1] There seemed in the language of the Reden ample reason for Novalis to understand its author in a similar way. For Schleiermacher had written that one who has allowed himself to be completely penetrated by his oneness with the universe is

> the true priest of the highest, for he brings it nearer those who are only accustomed to lay hold of the finite and the trivial. The heavenly and the eternal he exhibits as an object of enjoyment and agreement, as the sole exhaustless source of the things towards which their whole endeavor is directed. In this way he strives to awaken the slumbering germ of a better humanity, to kindly love for higher things, to change the common life into a nobler, to reconcile the children of earth with the Heaven that hears them, and to counterbalance the deep attachment of the age to the baser side. This is the higher priesthood that announces the inner meaning of all spiritual secrets, and speaks from the kingdom of God. It is the source of all visions and prophecies, of all the sacred works of art and inspired speeches that are scattered abroad, on the chance of finding some receptive heart where they may bring forth fruit.[2]

Schleiermacher's "true priest" who makes "the heavenly and the eternal" into "an object of enjoyment" is easily exchanged with Novalis's poet who holds the key to the transcendent.[3]

The identification of religion with art is then an element readily discoverable in the generation prior to Möhler and the thought-world in which he grew up. Its particular entry into his own thought may be best seen in the philosopher to whom Drey had so often directed his students' attention, Schelling. It is Schelling to whom Möhler refers when he writes of "philosophers of art" who maintain that "the beautiful is the manifestation and embodiment of truth." For Schelling had defined beauty as "the infinite set forth in the finite."[1] In the Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums he had identified Christianity as the religion of the infinite in the finite, seen especially in its "first idea," the incarnation. This unity of finite and infinite is not objective as in Greek religion, but subjective. The resolution of the antinomy between infinite and finite is not to be seen in some external reality but purely internally, within the human being. Thus the notions of mystery, miracle, and revelation are all necessary to Christianity in a way that would not be true of a religion such as that of the Greeks, which sought the union of the infinite and the finite in an external object and so required no historical foundation. The Christian God does not manifest himself in permanent natural forms outside of humanity but only within the human in occasional self-revelation. Consequently Christianity requires some means of maintaining those divine appearances, some way of making that revelation into a tradition. The ideas of such a religion directed toward the infinite within the finite require objectification.

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[1] Quoted in Kluckhohn, p. 175.

[2] Schleiermacher, On Religion, pp. 7f.

[3] See Forstman, pp. 82-86.

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[1] Schelling, System des transcendentalen Idealismus, Sämtliche Werke, 3:620.

> The original symbol of any intuition of God in it is history. But this is endless and immeasurable. It must accordingly be represented through a similarly infinite and yet limited manifestation, which is itself not simply real, like the state, but ideal, and which proclaims as an immediate presence the unity of all in the spirit in the midst of their separation into individuality. This symbolized intuition is the Church as a living work of art.[1]

This understanding of the Church as the expression of the lived spirituality of its members, and so as the externalization of religion, and the notion of that Church accordingly as a work of art is most clearly seen in Sailer's thought.

> What externalizes a man's inner life, what sets interiority forth exteriorly, is art in the broadest sense of the word, and what externalizes the life of internal religion is sacred art in the broadest sense of the word.[2]

Sailer, like Schleiermacher and unlike Schlegel who had made the very fact of a life beyond that of the senses religious, envisions religion as one element in man's inner life. Art, for Sailer, is the expression of interiority, and the expression of that interiority which is religious in character is sacred art. Thus, again like Schleiermacher, he avoids a simple identification of all art as religion. Religious life, the activity of the man motivated by religion, is sacred art "in the broadest sense of the word." Its highest expression is when a community of such persons acts out its internal religious life. The existence of a religious community, a union formed by members who are drawn together by mutual love which is the expression of their religious life, is the masterpiece of sacred art. It is the Church. "The life of the religious man is the primary art work and the union of religious men, which forms one body out of all the individual members, is the highest art work."[1]

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[1] Schelling, Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums, Sämtliche Werke, 5:293.

[2] Johann Michael Sailer, Neue Beiträge zur Bildung der Geistlichen (Munich, 1811), 2:97.

Church understood under the category of art work is then not a new direction for Catholic theology when Möhler employs it. But he has given it a new meaning. Sailer's use of the category was set in the context of his Erlebnistheologie. The romantic understanding of art was that it consisted in the externalization of the interior life of the artist where in feeling and sensibility he touched the transcendent world of spirit. That notion of art could very readily serve Sailer's ecclesiology, built on personal and communal religious experience. The Church is then seen as the externalization of the religious life of its members. The human members of the Church are the artists who create the great masterpiece. Sailer's use of the notion of Church as art work is based on a movement from within to without.

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[1] Johann Michael Sailer, "Vom Bunde der Religion mit der Kunst," Johann Michael Sailers Sämtliche Werke, ed. J. Widmer (Sulzbach, 1830-1841), 19:176. Geiselmann believes one of Sailer's chief contributions to the development of Catholic ecclesiology to be his union of two fruitful ideas of his time, the organic connection of art and Church with the romantic model of the organism; see Geiselmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit in den geistigen Bewegungen der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts," Sentire Ecclesiam, pp. 517-522.

That is the movement we have observed in Einheit in der Kirche's ecclesiology, but it is no longer the pattern employed in Symbolik. Möhler employs the image of the Church as work of art in a new way in his effort to balance the descending ecclesiology of the previous section with an ascending ecclesiology, i.e., one that moves from the capacities and requirements of the human being to the visible Church, and so to integrate the spiritual life of the individual with the historical community. Man is no longer the artist. Christ is the artist who creates the masterpiece; the members of the Church are the audience who respond admiringly to the work. Catholics are "full of joy and emotion," they are "enraptured," when they consider the community of life which they form. But they are the ones who consider, who contemplate, who view the great creation. They are the ones who are built up into the Church. The builder, the artist, is Christ.

> Christ, the eternal truth, has built the Church; in the community of believers truth, changed through his Spirit into love, has become a living reality among men. How then could it lack the highest degree of beauty?[1]

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:394.

This is worked out from that statement of the "philosophers of art" who describe beauty as "the manifestation and embodiment of truth." It is not the individual human being who has embodied truth, nor has any community of human beings. It is the incarnation of Christ "the eternal truth" which gives visible appearance to truth, and so Christ is both the artist and the work. Since the Church is the extension of the incarnation of Christ and is implicitly founded in the incarnation, the Church is that perfect art work. It is presented to man's wondering and delighted gaze from without, not produced by man from within.

In his attempt to respond to the problem created by the earlier Erlebnistheologie which he had first addressed in Einheit in der Kirche and which he had now to approach from his Christocentric viewpoint, namely the problem of holding together personal spirituality and a visible historical community, Möhler had maintained that the visible Church answered to human sensibility. The Church as a work of art created by Christ is indeed a masterpiece because it communicates so well to its audience. It satisfies human feelings and imagination because it presents visibly the true God-man relation. That is the "one idea" which the Church, the great work of art, communicates: "the reconciliation of men with God." It is able to communicate this "idea" because it presents "to the imagination of the Catholic" an "image" of the union of members scattered throughout the world who are united in close interaction while their individuality and freedom are still respected. This union which does not cancel the unique reality of the participants is the image of the God-man relation. Because human beings are reconciled with God, they are reconciled with one another.

This image captivates Möhler himself and leads him into a rhapsodic comment on the unity of the Church in which he compares it to the state. For the state, too, is a "work of art" and so marvellous a work that we can still sympathize with the men of antiquity who regarded it as divine and regarded anyone who disrupted the unity of the state as the most abhorrent of criminals. To the degree that the Church is an even nobler work and greater unity than the state, for it knows no borders, to that same degree any element of disunity is even more to be avoided. Schism in the Church is repellent to man's imagination. This comparison of the Church and the state as artistic achievements flows directly from Schelling's statement that in a religion which seeks to uncover the infinite in the finite, the intuition of God demands an outward expression which is simultaneously infinite and limited and which is accordingly not real, i.e., the state, but ideal. Schelling had located such an outward expression in the Church, which "expresses the unity of all in the spirit as immediately present in spite of separation on particular points." It is this comparison between the "real" state and the "ideal" Church which Möhler develops briefly in this first step of his anthropological grounding of the Church.[1]

Reason: the Church as the Guarantor of Truth

The second step in that grounding, once the Catholic doctrine of the Church has been shown to satisfy man's aesthetic sensibilities, is to show that it also meets the demands of human reason. This is accomplished by demonstrating that "the idea which [the Catholic] forms of the Church uniquely answers the concept of the Christian Church and the goal of revelation."[2] This is the method of coincidence which Möhler learned from Schelling and Drey, which he had employed in Einheit in der Kirche and which he had described in his review of Gengler's Ueber das Verhältnis der Theologie zur Philosophie in 1827. In the latter he had written that one must seek truth hidden beneath appearance by observing the convergence of the "manifest existent" with the "concept."[1] Now he writes of the establishment of correspondence between the "idea" which he and other Catholics hold of the Church and the "concept" of the Church. Idea here is equated with the earlier manifest existent, i.e., it is the mental image of the Church which a Catholic forms from his experience of the Church. That idea rooted in experience is then shown to coincide with the necessary concept of the Church, i.e., with the notion of what the Church must be if there is any Church at all. This coincidence of the objective, the existing reality of the Catholic Church, and the subjective, the concept of the Church which necessarily arises from the connection of accepted truths, satisfies the demands of reason according to this _wissenschaftlich_ method of identity.

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[1] This is the basis for the state-Church comparison which surfaces here and is implicit later in section 37 in the remarks on the ethical basis of the Church. I find Eschweiler's treatment of this comparison as an indication of deep Hegelian influence on Möhler through the Berlin philosopher's idea of the state, to be greatly exaggerated; see Eschweiler, Johann Adam Möhlers Kirchenbegriff, pp. 65-164. Although fascinating in many instances, Eschweiler's argument is vitiated by three major defects: 1. his failure to place Möhler in the context of Catholic theology from the Aufklärung on, e.g., to see him in relation to Sailer's Erlebnistheologie; 2. his insufficient attention to Möhler's development not as a simple rejection of Schleiermacher's panentheism but as a critique of the Protestant theologian; 3. his underestimation of Schelling's continued influence on the Catholic Tübingen school.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:395.

Möhler isolates two elements in the idea of the Church held by Catholics: unity and visibility. It is interesting to note that the attribute which had been the central category for ecclesiology in his great work of 1825 is now joined with the preoccupation of the ecclesiological sections of _Symbolik_. His task now is twofold: first, he must show how the unity of the Church is an essential note of the concept of the Church, and second, he must then indicate why visibility is demanded in that concept by "the goal of revelation."

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[1] _Theologische Quartalschrift_ 9 (1827): 505.

Section 36 has already indicated the connection between the visibility of the Church and the incarnation. Thus a Christological base may be anticipated in the second part of Möhler's attempt to illustrate the compatibility of the Catholic notion of the Church with human reason, but the first part of the argument as well, that concerning the unity of the Church, which had been so strongly pneumatologically based in 1825, is now conducted from a Christocentric perspective.

By the very nature of human reason truth can only be conceived as unitary. This holds for the truth of Christianity as well: there cannot be several true Christianities. Christianity is in every respect related to Christ who is one. "The Son of God, our Redeemer, is one definite being; he is what he is and nothing else, eternally like himself, constantly one and the same." Thus there is a true way to understand who Christ is and any number of false ways. Since everything in Christianity is finally dependent on the way in which the person of Christ is envisioned, it is of the utmost importance to come to the true understanding of Christ. The work of the Redeemer cannot be understood properly if his person is misunderstood, and if the work of redemption is misconceived it can not be rightly appropriated. Consequently Möhler can state that an erroneous opinion regarding the person of Christ must exert a "more or less damaging effect" on the one holding that opinion, and that a false belief concerning Christ's work necessarily entails unfortunate results in the practice of the Christian life. Because Christ is one and his work is one, the Church which proclaims his person and work must be one. It is one because its faith is one, since its faith is true and there is only one true understanding of Christ's person and work, and because its proclamation is one, since it must teach that one true faith.

That one faith of the Church is suited to all human beings, for the whole of humanity stands in need of the one truth.

> The human spirit is universally the same and always and everywhere is made for the truth and the one truth; in all the shifting relations of time and place, in all the differences of education and culture, its essential spiritual needs are eternally the same.[1]

All human beings experience sin and its effects. All stand in need of God's self-communication in grace and revelation. The proclamation of faith is, therefore, needed by everyone, although it is possible that one may by reason of his intellectual gifts penetrate that truth more keenly than another who simply accepts it. It is one faith, nevertheless. The universality of the human need for redemption and the oneness of the redemptive work of Christ rooted in the oneness of the truth of his person justify

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:396.

"for the thinking Catholic" the oneness of the Church. The claim of the Catholic Church that there is only one Church and the practical effects of that claim in the experience of its members is seen to coincide with the demand of the concept of a Christian Church that it be one.

The second step in the argument that the Catholic understanding of the Church satisfies the demands of reason is a demonstration of the necessity of a visible ecclesial community for the completion of revelation. In the preceding section, Möhler had argued that the incarnation required a visible Church. Now, in keeping with the anthropological base of this section newly added in the second edition, which I have termed "upward ecclesiology," that argument is turned around. Man could not attain to any religious truth with complete certainty either on his own or by means of ancient traditions. Some divine self-communication was necessary. Möhler includes both the "natural theology" of rationalist apologetics and the traditionalist position of Bautain and his own colleagues at Tübingen in his rejection of religious knowledge apart from revelation. This, of course, reflects the position on the God-man relation which we have observed in the first four editions of Symbolik, although even at this point in the second edition he is careful to qualify his statement by adding that man cannot arrive at true knowledge of God or his own nature "with assurance."[1] It is also true that it is postlapsarian man who is indicated in the passage. But had he lived to complete the revisions of the fifth edition, Möhler would have had to rewrite this passage in such a way as to exclude the idea that man required the self-communication of God for his own integrity.

That divine self-communication, if it is to be effective in enlightening humanity, must present itself in a form corresponding to human receptive capacities. In order to seize the mind of man and thus become not merely an opinion which could still co-exist with "pagan doubtfulness, the sinful indecisiveness of mind which stands on the same level as ignorance," but a "determinative authority,"[2] revelation must be both visibly and permanently manifested. This permanence had previously been shown to be the necessary result of the incarnation. But an incarnate revelation is needed precisely because human beings are creatures of sense. Man requires the visible demonstration of an idea in order to grasp it fully, or to be grasped by it. The idea of Christianity is the true God-man relation, and it is bodied forth in Christ. The manifestation of that idea must be kept constantly fresh, however, and thus a permanent image is required, "which must be made present to every individual throughout the whole history of humanity in order continually to renew the archetype."[3]

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[1] Ibid., 1:396. [2] Ibid., 1:397. [3] Ibid.

Thus Möhler can maintain that it is the Catholic conviction that the revelation which is the incarnation of Christ "would have succeeded either not at all or else only with grave imperfection" had it not become permanent. This it was able to do because Christ could impart to his self-communication "the highest level of intensive vitality," "the most perfect imaginable actuality," "i.e. to breathe into it the breath of life and to bring forth as his creation a society."

It is here that Möhler presents the basis of his later argument in Neue Untersuchungen against Baur's "idealism." It will be the basis of his rejection of the "historical-speculative" foundation for the unity of Christian doctrine which Baur attempted in Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus. In his reply in 1834, Möhler maintained, as we have seen, that "it is impossible that pure knowledge could ever pass over into positive divine faith because this latter is of entirely different origin and entirely different nature."[1] In this section added to Symbolik a year previously, he phrases his position in terms of Christ's appearance as an external authority for history, not an internal product of history. The fundamental statement in section 37 of Symbolik which corresponds to Neue Untersuchungen's denial that pure knowledge can become positive faith is that "we could never mediate to ourselves purely spiritually an external authority such as Christ."[1] But, for the same reason that man must receive revelation as an external authority, that authority, if it is not itself immediately present, must be mediated by another external authority. "Thus authority requires authority for its mediation." The visible Church is demanded by man's rational nature if it is to be grasped in its depths by divine self-communication.

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen, p. 481.

> The authority of the Church mediates everything which in the Christian religion rests on authority and is authority, i.e., the Christian religion itself, so that Christ himself remains an authority for us only in so far as the Church is an authority for us.[2]

In the previous section, Möhler had urged that a non-incarnate divine communication would have resulted in an invisible Church. Now he reverses that progression: if one accepts only an invisible Church, a Church which cannot be an authority for us as creatures of sense, one will inevitably be led to deny the reality of the incarnation. An invisible Church needs no visible manifestation of the idea of Christianity, the true God-man relation, and so needs no external proofs of divine commission such as miracles, indeed needs no incarnation of that idea such as Christ.

The true Church must be a visible authority attesting to its founder, not merely by its preaching and its work, but by its very existence, "for it has proceeded immediately from the living intuition of these perceived truths" which Christ incarnated. The Church must incarnate, however imperfectly it may in fact do so, the God-man relation which is perfectly incarnated in Christ. Only so can it be the authority which makes present Christ as the authority. The Church must be "analogous" to Christ.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:398. [2] Ibid.

> If the Church is not the authority which represents Christ, then everything dissolves again into darkness, uncertainty, doubt, error, into unbelief and superstition, revelation is as though it had never been, it fails in its true goal, and consequently must be called into question and finally denied.[1]

Möhler advances two complementary illustrations of the need for a visible Church, both of which he claims grow out of the experience man has of himself. Thus both are in accord with the anthropological line of argument of the whole of this section added in the second edition. The first concerns the support which the individual draws from a community in the maintenance of his convictions, and the second the extraordinary power which must be sensibly exerted on the individual in order to move him to abandon a communal misapprehension. There is a significant difference between Möhler's attitude toward the ethical value of human communities now in 1833, and the opinion expressed eight years earlier in Einheit in der Kirche. In both cases the significance of the community for the individual's ethical and religious self-understanding is noted. Now Möhler writes:

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[1] Ibid., 1:399.

> The power of the society in which man lives is so great that, as a rule, it always impresses its image on anyone who comes within its sphere. Whether it serves the truth or a lie, whether it devotes itself to higher pursuits or produces only worthless efforts, invariably it will fashion its members in its own image.[1]

This is far from the position espoused in 1825. Then community had unequivocally been identified with goodness, with truth, with God's self-revelation, in contrast with the individual who in isolation was cut off from the vivifying power of the whole. In section 31 of Einheit in der Kirche, which was added after the completion of the rest of the work in order to give it "an even deeper foundation" and which we have seen to be panentheistic in its view, Möhler had built his argument on the conviction which he had regarded as a "universally acknowledged truth,"[2] that man's apprehension of God deepened in direct proportion to his self-expansion to the level of universal humanity. The wider man's social horizon, the more adequate will be his perception of the divine. Only the egoism of the individual which refused to open itself out in loving acceptance to the totality of mankind constricted that perception. Man's membership in partial communities gave rise to partial "gods." Thus nationalism and polytheism are closely interconnected: the limitation of community is the distortion of revelation, for God is fully revealed only in the whole. Yet a notion of God is present even in a limited society. Only that hypothetical creature, the completely isolated individual, is incapable of any notion of God. Any society is the triumph of love over egoism, the wider the society, the greater the triumph. Society is ethically good; only its restriction is evil. Every community reveals God, the more universal the community, the more adequate the revelation.

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[1] Ibid. [2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

Thus, in 1825, Möhler had regarded human society as intrinsically good and revelatory, and its limitation as the source of evil and distortion. But in this section of Symbolik's second edition, human communities are fundamentally ambiguous, neither good nor evil in themselves. Society can serve to lead man to truth or to keep him imprisoned in error. Against the background of this new, less immediately optimistic estimate of human societies, Möhler asserts the need of a visible community of belief. Precisely because the community does form its members in its own image, the believer outside a reinforcing society of faith "is necessarily given over as prey to the most destructive doubtfulness, and faith is either not established at all or lost again."[1] Thus a permanent visible Church is required for the support of the individual's faith.

The visible Church is the product of sensible signs which were needed to dispel the pervasive influence of a society founded on error. If the community's power over the individual's understanding of himself and of his world is as decisive as Möhler maintains, only proofs which arrest the individual on every level of his being--proofs which are, therefore, sensible--can counteract that power.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:399.

> A particular point of view toward matters of divinity which has once won complete vitality in a people or in a number of peoples, fetters man with so mighty a power that any *essential* change for *the better*, i.e. the passage from error to truth, appears impossible without a higher external intervention. . . . Error had assumed the rights which belong only to truth, and man who is forced through his whole nature to accept the cult of the social life in which he is set for the true expression, for the definitive image of religious truth as it is in itself, required extraordinary external proofs for the new order of things, and, to be sure, until this had established itself, too, in a great communal pattern of life.[1]

Thus miracles were needed in order to establish the Church in the face of pagan Graeco-Roman culture. Once the Church had in fact begun to develop into a rival society next to and within the Roman world, a subculture with its own communal bonds, miracles became unnecessary. They were the initial signs of the presence of the external authority of faith. The Church itself became the authority which attests to the authority of Christ, whose extension it is. Thus, the miracles of Christ, Möhler writes, are continued in the Church, because their function was to testify to the reality of an authority outside the individual and human society, and this work is now that of the Church.

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[1] Ibid., 1:399f.

The miracles of Christ reflect the nature of Christianity itself which is "divine and positive," in which "idea and history, internal and external, are inseparable."[1] "The idealists of our time" do not require miracles, for the Christianity which they propound is a mere abstract idea, a purely internal, subjectively derived view of the God-man relation which, in the last resort, always fails to maintain the reality of both poles. "It is an idealism just as false and futile which separates the authority of the Church from the authority of Christ." The idealist construction of Christianity, on which Möhler would expand a year later in his debate with Baur, stumbles on the point which the Catholic Tübingen scholar had now accepted as the central element in the construction of the Christian religion in general and of the Christian Church, as the embodiment of that religion, in particular: the incarnation.

> As from the very beginning on, idea and history, doctrine and fact, internal and external truth, inward and outward proclamation were organically united, so must it be with religion and Church, and all this for this reason, that God has become man.[2]

Both subsidiary arguments, that which begins from the need for communal support for intellectual conviction and that which notes the need for sensible signs to counteract socially embodied error, are advanced as further illustrations of the central affirmation of this section demonstrating the conformity of the Catholic doctrine of the Church to the requirements of reason: Christ is an authority for humanity, not a development of humanity, and as such must be mediated to men by an authority. This is a corollary of Möhler's concern to maintain the God-man relation together with the integrity of both poles. The subsidiary arguments have indicated a definite shift in Möhler's thinking about communities, a shift which is itself traceable to his increased sensitivity to the validity of the human as human. In the panentheist system of Einheit in der Kirche, so clearly laid out in section 31 of that work, every community was of ethical value, because it represented the individual's self-transcendence in love, and of religious value, because that self-transcendence was itself revelatory of the divine. Complete transcendence of the individual would then be perfectly revelatory. That total transcendence was achieved by embracing the whole human community, which represented the universe for us, in love. "This being one with the universe is likewise the true being-in-God, the condition of true knowledge of God, the creator of the universe."[1] Thus every community is pointed toward ethical perfection and divine self-revelation and, as the community broadens, those ends are progressively fulfilled. The experience of personal transcendence is identification with the total human community, and that identification is the uncovery of God, for the totality of the universe, humanly presented as the entirety of the human race, is the fullness of God's self-revelation because it exists in God. This is the panentheist view which Möhler had become convinced must inevitably slide into pantheism. If the human pole of the divine-human relationship is to avoid being swallowed up in the divine, then human community must be a real possibility opening into full maturity for man as man. God's self-communication is not demanded by the finite creature to be finite, even in community.

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[1] Ibid., 1:401.

[2] Ibid.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 98.

Although, as we have seen, Möhler did not resolve this problem of the formulation of the God-man polarity in a way which satisfied his own demands until the fifth edition of Symbolik, the question had been a dominant concern since the publication of Athanasius der Grosse in 1827. Thus, in this second edition of his work on the doctrinal differences between Catholicism and Protestantism in 1833, a very clear difference emerges between the manner in which he now treats the relationship of the individual to human society and his treatment of it in Einheit in der Kirche. That difference becomes obvious in the third stage of section 37 in which he shows that the Catholic conception of the Church satisfies the needs of the will.

Will: the Church as Liberator

The Catholic understanding of the nature of the Church gives direction to the will in such a way that it brings about "the religious and ethical cultivation of the whole man."[1] But it is no longer the effect on the will brought about by firm acceptance of truth which concerns Möhler. That was the burden of his remarks on the agreement between the concept of one visible Church and reason. That firm acceptance is the result of submission to an external authority which attests to the truth. Now his interest is centered in the "direction of the will which is given with living incorporation into an all-embracing society in pursuit of religious goals." In 1825, it was the incorporation into such a society which revealed religious truth, God's communication of himself. By placing revelation in the individual's "expansion" to the whole in love, the danger arose of making that revelation immanent in the individual who is now one with the humanity. Divine self-communication could be seen as the community's coming to self-consciousness in the individual. The Holy Spirit and the Christian Gemeingeist might be understood as identical. Now the community's existence is the warrant for the great religious truth, the proper God-man relation. The truth is communicated to the individual not because he becomes identical with the society to which he belongs, in this case the Church, but because that society always remains more than the individual and so, to that extent, an "external" authority. In its authoritarian revelatory role the religious community remains greater than the individual and is set over against him; it is in its role of trainer of his will that the individual becomes identified with the religious society within which he is set.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:401.

Möhler speaks first of human society at large and then draws a parallel with the Church. Society is "the education of man in man."[1] The summary statement of the position is that "continuance of communication and community with foreigners and, accordingly, the freely willed acceptance of a relationship of dependence upon them is thus absolutely posited with general human education."[2] The exchange of goods is accompanied by the exchange of ideas between peoples. A nation which is dependent solely upon itself is a nation of savages who feel no need of communication with their neighbors and to whom all foreigners must be enemies. The greater the sense of mutual dependency between nations, on the other hand, the more reduced will be the idea that anyone is a foreigner. As nations enrich one another with their own peculiar cultural products and their material goods, national boundaries become less and less important and "humanity is exalted." This mutual education by the discovery of mutual dependence between various societies or nations is accompanied by a similar process within each society. As a society becomes more civilized, better educated, more richly cultivated and diversified, its members find themselves more and more dependent upon one another. That dependency exists in increasingly complex ways and on multiple levels of life and activity. That increase of mutual demands and duties, rights and obligations, requires for their harmonious interplay a corresponding development of law and custom within the society. Thus the level of intellectual and moral cultivation of the individual, which is in direct proportion to his free acceptance of dependence upon others within his community and of his community upon other communities, is also in direct proportion to the elaboration of law. The conclusion is clear: "With every higher step of internal freedom the external obligations proportionately increase." The opposite is also true: as an individual or a society sinks into barbarism, the demands of society or of humanity at large become less. Thus the most savage human being or nation, although interiorly bound in the narrowest straits of ignorance and fear, is, as regards external obligations, the freest.

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[1] Ibid., 1:402. [2] Ibid., 1:403.

> What do these observations mean other than a wonderful, mysterious, never totally explicable immersion of the individual man in humanity, so that he understands himself more completely the more he seems to lose himself

> in the whole, and rediscovers himself only in humanity?[1]

Certainly there is a similarity between this notion of man's dependence upon "the whole" and the relationship between the individual and humanity which represents the universe in section 31 of Einheit in der Kirche. But there are even more striking differences. In the panentheist vision of 1825 the individual's self-expansion to the embrace of the universe embodied in the human race led to the discovery of God. For it is in the whole, whether of the universe or of humanity, that God has "wholly" revealed himself. Here, however, in this passage added to Symbolik's second edition, when the individual man "seems to lose himself in the whole," what he discovers is not God, but himself. Möhler is describing the education of the human being to be a human being, not to be "in God." Man's self-expansion enables him to be truly what he is--a finite creature. Nor is that a lame conclusion, although in the framework of the earlier panentheist Weltanschauung, it might have so appeared. There is an intelligibility, an integrity to being finite which Möhler had tried to preserve in the formulation of the God-man relation ever since his critique of panentheism in Athanasius der Grosse. In 1833, he still had not satisfactorily resolved the problem of that formulation. The direction which his solution would take did not appear until his revisions in the incomplete fifth edition of Symbolik, as we have seen. But here, in the new section 37, another indication of his concern for the problem is found. In his embracing his oneness with mankind, with the whole, in his acceptance of mutual dependence upon his fellow men, the individual does not find that he is "in God," he discovers that he is a human being and what it is to be a human being. Within that discovery the individual may uncover his receptivity for God's self-communication. But that divine revelation still stands over against man. The human discovery of self is not the discovery of God, but of the capacity to be addressed by God. Revelation must be an "external" authority.

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[1] Ibid.

For the young scholar at Tübingen, swept up in the excitement of his early romantic vision, the rule of law was the remains of love. The true vital principle of any community was mutual love. Law arose only when the ardor of love had cooled. The internal principle, the love of each member of the community for the others, was primary not only in importance but in time. Law, the external principle, could only appear as a useless oddity in a community fired by the principle of love internal to each member. When that fire died out or was reduced to mere embers, law showed its importance for society. The relationship between the internal principle of societal cohesion, which Möhler names love, and the external principle of organization, law, was one of succession. Now, however, the more mature Möhler sees that relationship as one of simultaneity and reciprocity. It is as the one grows that the other takes form. In 1825 the internal and external principles of community stood in an inverse ratio, now they are placed in a direct one. In Einheit in der Kirche the internal principle could bring about external organization, but the latter could never effect the former. Now the causality is mutual. Thus the individual's identity with the society, and the society's being placed over against the individual as an external authority, condition one another.

Möhler has followed the same outline here that he used in section 31 of his 1825 work: setting out the basic relationship of the individual to the community and then moving to the question of the relationship of the individual to a religious society, the Church. Now, however, his notion of the connection between the internal education of man as man and the external demands placed upon him by the society leads him to a very different ecclesiological position than that of Einheit.

> Nevertheless internal freedom through external obligation, on which discussion has centered to this point, is not the most internal liberation, and is only an enlightening comparison for it. True liberation from narrowness and self-seeking is a task which, it is acknowledged, only religion may resolve. Just as humanity is conditioned by life in the state and obedience to its institutions, and, indeed, by a dependence, even if looser, upon all peoples, so genuine religiousness is conditioned by affiliation with the Church.[1]

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[1] Ibid., 1:403f.

True freedom, freedom from selfishness in order to be truly oneself, depends upon one's union with a religious community. But what kind of religious community will most successfully present those conditions of societal obligation which lead to this "most internal liberation"? Möhler suggests two characteristics needed by the Church which claims to direct the will of the individual toward real inner freedom. The first is permanence, stability, firmness. The Church must possess the solidity necessary to produce "external bonds" which outwardly condition "internal freedom." A society which attempts to codify the interrelations of its members must be a stable society, a society which has the strength to express itself in the form of law. Fundamentally it must be a visible society, "no empty imagining, no idle phantom," but a tangible reality. Such a Church can present its members with "wise ordinances, holy laws, revered customs and practices" which will demand and condition faith and active love in its members and produce in them the two qualities which especially correspond to this visible, stable religious community: humility and self-denial. And so Möhler can promise confidently that "whoever knows how to live rightly in the Catholic Church, the idea of which is the actual unity and community of life of all the faithful, must be the most perfect of men with reference to moral and religious improvement."[1]

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[1] Ibid., 1:404.

The second quality which the Church must possess if it is to produce the liberating effect upon man's will which he has the right to expect of it, is universality. For, as Möhler has already noted of human society in general, the wider the interchange between nations, the more truly and thoroughly civilized will each nation be. The more all-encompassing the community, the more relations will each of its members assume by entering the community. These relations, which entail obligations and restraints, further rather than decrease the true freedom of the will by the alleviation of the ignorance and narrowness of solitude and self-sufficiency. The virtue which this universality of the Church will produce in its member is "the most genuine humanity." Möhler immediately explains that he can employ that term "because God has become man."[1]

The statement that it is in the Church that one attains to "the most genuine humanity" need not be understood as a denial of the integrity of the human being. It remains true, as we observed above, that, in Möhler's view by the time of this 1833 edition of Symbolik, man's immersion in the human community leads him to discover who he is, not who God is. Two points should be noted which may illuminate Möhler's rather cryptic comment that the incarnation means that the Christian community is the *locus* of true humanity.

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[1] Ibid.

First, we must recall his earlier panegyric on the beauty of the Catholic conception of the Church when he discussed that conception's satisfaction of man's sensibility. There, too, Möhler had compared the Church to the state, remarking that, if antiquity regarded the latter as a work of art, the Christian must with greater reason venerate a society which unites humanity across national boundaries and which appeals to the deepest, most interior reaches of men.

> Its peace, having come down from heaven, penetrates deeper into the human breast than any earthly dissension. Out of all nations, often deeply divided by politicians and men caught up in temporal affairs, it builds up the house of God in which all are united in one hymn of praise, as in the temple of the peaceful village all the petty enemies and rivals are gathered with one heart about one sanctuary.[1]

Thus the Church produces the "most genuine humanity" because it is the most all-embracing human society in a twofold sense: it transcends all external limitations and divisions, and it engages the individual on the most intimate levels of his existence. It is, then, because of its breadth and depth and not specifically because of its supernatural character that the Church is acclaimed as the community which trains the individual's will in accord with true humanity.

But what of the Christological reference with which Möhler explains his statement? Does this not imply that true humanity is achieved only because of the incarnation? And does it not mean, therefore, that the human pole is incapable of being itself apart from its relation to the divine, thus endangering both the integrity of the human and the gratuity of the initiation of that relationship by the divine pole? If so, it represents the unresolved difficulty in the way of relating the divine and the human in the first four editions of Symbolik. We might then presume that the phrase would disappear in the fifth edition, had Möhler lived to revise the ecclesiological section of his work in accord with the significant changes made in the earlier sections. Indeed, it might appear that much of this section 37 would have had to undergo revision. One must recall, however, that Möhler never seeks to establish the integrity of the human apart from the God-man relation, but to safeguard it within that relation. His concern, as we have seen, has been to maintain the two poles in relation and not collapse one into the other. Thus he rejects any formulation of the relation which would require divine self-communication for the human to be validly human. But it remains true that the human is constituted as one pole of the God-man relation, and so the perfection of that relation, the God-man himself, must accordingly be the perfect human being. When the human being discovers his true humanity, he discovers his directedness, his relatedness to the divine. Furthermore, one must note that for the discovery of that true humanity, the individual must recognize the bonds which unite him with all other human beings, one of whom is, because of the incarnation, the God-man. Thus, the human community itself, with which each man must accept his multiple connections expressed in rights and duties, embraces Christ within it, so that, simply in fact, to attain to "the most genuine humanity," each must be related to Christ, "because God has become man."

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[1] Ibid., 1:393.

The Church and Sin

Section 37, the "rationalist" upward moment complementing the "supernaturalist" downward moment of section 36, can be seen as the second step of the wissenschaftlich method which Möhler had learned from Drey and had employed even in his first work, Einheit. This method, which the Catholic Tübingen scholars had taken over from Schelling, Möhler had described as "the demonstration that the objective coincides with the subjective."[1] Section 36 had provided the "idea" of the Church, seen as a necessary continuation of the incarnation. Section 37 has shown how that "idea," which included the notions of visibility and humanity, coincides with the religious community which corresponds to man's expectations on the levels of sensibility, reason, and will. But even within this section added to the second edition, the characteristic two-prong framework is evident. For, having shown what that religious society must be which answers man's expectations on the three levels of his being, Möhler concludes by demonstrating that such a Church is precisely the religious community found in the New Testament.[1]

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[1] Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 505.

This is, however, still an adaptation of the wissenschaftlich method, as Möhler himself recognized. He has tried to show through sections 36 and 37 the identity of the idea of the Church deduced from that most fundamental of Christian dogmas, the incarnation, with the idea of the Church deduced from human nature and the idea of the Church set forth in scripture. But he has not moved from the ideal level. The conviction of the truth, however, arises when it is seen that "the manifest existent converges with the concept, i.e., that the idea in whose truth I previously only believe, explains all the phenomena." Only then is one assured "that the real objective of my explanatory ground of the phenomena is the actual existent."[2] The actually existent Church, however, is not the beautiful ideal which Möhler has sketched out. The "phenomena" of the life of the Catholic Church do not unequivocally correspond to that Church which is "the Son of God appearing among men in human form in an ongoing fashion, constantly renewed, eternally rejuvenated, his lasting incarnation."[1] How is this lack of identity to be explained without concluding either that the ideal has no reality, which is to say that "everything dissolves again into darkness, uncertainty, doubt, error, into unbelief and superstition, revelation is as though it never had been,"[2] or that the real is divorced from and inadequate to the ideal, which is to reintroduce the separation of the visible and invisible Churches?

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:405-408.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 505.

Möhler's response to the question is to deny its validity on the basis of his presuppositions. First, the method consistently employed by Möhler in Einheit in der Kirche and in Symbolik is one which allows him to hold together historical investigation and theological speculation, indeed to ground each in the other. That method he had learned from Drey who had developed it out of his own enthusiastic study of Schelling. The unproved, in fact unprovable, axiom at the base of all knowledge, according to Schelling, is the mutual inherence of reality and ideality.

> We may now express this presupposition as the correspondence [of knowledge] with the subject matter, as the pure resolution of the particular in the universal, or in some other way, but this may still be thought neither generally nor in any particular instance apart from the more basic presupposition that the truly ideal, alone and without any further mediation, is likewise the truly real, and aside from that there is no other reality. We are not actually able to prove this essential unity itself in philosophy, since it is precisely the starting point of all science. Only this may be proven, that

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:389.

[2] Ibid., 1:399.

> without it there is no knowledge whatsoever, and further it may be demonstrated that in any field which makes the merest pretense to be science the goal is in fact this identity or this resolution of the real in the ideal (and, contrariwise, the possibility of the complete transformation of the ideal into the real).[1]

The presupposition is not demonstrable directly. It can be arrived at only by way of a transcendental deduction: it must be so if anything is known at all. It is certainly not, therefore, something empirically disprovable.

Second, Möhler's point of departure and continuing norm throughout the ecclesiological sections of Symbolik is the incarnation, the dogmatic formulation of which holds the divine and human united inseparably but unconfusedly. No Church exists if there is no divine-human relationship, and the paradigmatic instance of that relationship is Christ. This, if there is any Church, the divine and the human elements within it must be inseparable.

Consequently, Möhler writes:

> To Catholics it seems the most trivial undertaking when such images of the Church as we have tried to give are mocked as ideals to which nothing on earth has yet corresponded and to which in the future as well nothing will correspond perfectly. In fact, little could be said to them which they already know better of their own accord, than that the idea is not the common reality, and vice versa; but they also know that, where no idea lies at the foundation of the reality, there is as little truth as where nothing real corresponds to the idea.[2]

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[1] Schelling, Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums, Sämtliche Werke, 5:215.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:408.

The objection is trivial because it attempts to disprove a necessary starting-point by empirical data. The starting-point is necessary both because of the method employed and because of the subject at hand; in the former it finds expression in Schelling's absolute principle of identity, in the latter in the fundamental Christian dogma of the incarnation. But although the objection is dismissed as trivial, the data from which it arises are not and can not be. Möhler intends to take those data, the checkered history of the Church, and turn them into a further support for his position.

The key to the proper understanding of Möhler's treatment of the question of sinfulness within the Church is to be found in his constant concern since 1827 to maintain the reality of both poles of the God-man relation. For to dismiss the Church which he has tried to depict because there is no perfect corresponding reality is the same as to ridicule Christianity because Christians do not perfectly embody the Gospel.

> Everything must live on the basis of ideals to which the vulgar reality does not correspond; else how could it still be vulgar reality? The words of the Lord, "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," are not therefore reduced to nothing even though no man is equal to God. Rather, woe to him who wishes to dismiss the ideal because he does not find it perfectly expressed among men.[1]

One cannot understand the Lord's injunction to be perfect as the Father is perfect to mean that one must be equal to God. The equation of God and man, their identification one with the other, is the very point against which Möhler has striven since his rejection of panentheism. If Christianity is the proclamation of the identity of the divine and the human, then Christianity is manifestly false. If the Church is the identity of the divine with a human community, then it too is manifestly false. But the God-man relation is a relation, i.e., it has two distinct poles. The hypostatic union is a union, not an identity; the two natures, although inseparable, are never confused. And the Church which is understood as the extension of that union, the expression of that God-man relation, must maintain the distinctness of both its divine and human elements.

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[1] Ibid., 1:409.

The fact "that always, from Christ and his apostles on, in whose midst a Judas lived, there has been much evil in the Church, indeed that at times it seemed to overwhelm the good," in no way destroys the holiness of the Church. To speak of sin in the Church is only to say that the Church is and remains human. To say that it is holy is to say that it is and remains divine. Both statements are true. To deny the reality of the Church which Möhler has described as the Catholic understanding is to say that the Church, if it exists, must be divine. The human must be swallowed up in the Church and transmuted into something else. It is once again to misunderstand the God-man relation in which both poles are respected. Thus Möhler can simultaneously acknowledge the evil which exists within the Church, a sinfulness which affects even those occupying positions of leadership, e.g., popes, bishops, priests, "who unconscionably and indefensibly failed in those areas dependent precisely on them to establish a better life-style" or who, "through scandalous behavior and living, extinguished the still glimmering torch which they should have kindled" and whom "hell has devoured," and still maintain that the Church is "forever pure and eternally undefiled."[1] Those two statements are compatible only to those who can think the God-man relation in its full integrity.

For Möhler the history of the Church, which presents critics with the evidence for their charges that the existing visible Church cannot be the sublime Church which he has described, is the demonstration of the reality of his ideal. For no invisible community could survive the battering which the Church has undergone from its enemies without and its unworthy members within. This strife-torn history was inevitable, for the Church "can never work outside the sphere of evil; rather its vocation calls it to enter into the very midst of that evil and to demonstrate ever anew its power for renewal."[2] Scoring a polemical point, he uses the existence of Protestantism as a demonstration that the Church can survive terrible evil within itself, for "the Protestants possess in themselves a fully undeniable proof of the massive neglect of the people in the fifteenth century: never could a doctrine such as theirs have arisen, still less been so widespread, if individual teachers and priests had been adequate to their calling."[1] But this recognition of sin within the Church is also the basis for eventual reunion. In a passage remarkable for its irenic tone and ecumenical hope, Möhler writes:

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[1] Ibid., 1:410-411.

[2] Ibid., 1:409.

> This is the point at which some day Catholics and Protestants in great numbers will meet and stretch out their hands to one another. Aware of their guilt, both must proclaim: "We have all fallen, it is the Church alone which cannot fall; we have all sinned, it alone is immaculate upon the earth." To this open admission of common guilt will be joined the festival of reunion.

It is noteworthy that Möhler's admission of sin within the Church affects the Church's members, but not the Church itself: they have sinned, but it is sinless. The question might be raised whether, had he lived to revise the ecclesiological sections in the fifth edition of Symbolik, this passage would have been phrased in quite the same way. For it seems to imply that the determination of the God-man relation is the work of the divine pole alone. If the Church, as the continuation of the incarnation, is the embodiment of the God-man relation, the statement that the human pole can fail in its receptivity to the divine without in any way affecting the quality of the relationship itself seems to reflect the difficulty already observed in the first four editions of Symbolik which Möhler had in maintaining the full validity of the human pole of the relationship. Here it shows itself in his inability to speak of a sinful Church, rather than simply of a Church whose members are sinful. The Church as the extension of the incarnation could then be seen as guaranteed that the failure of the human within it to be perfectly attuned to the divine will never be such as to destroy that inseparable but unconfused union of the two within it in any radical or permanent way, while at the same time that failure really does affect the relationship itself in that it affects one pole. Thus the embodiment of the relationship, the Church, may be said to have sinned.[1] Certainly the possibility of such a statement is at least opened up by the more balanced divine-human polarity attained in the final edition.

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[1] Ibid., 1:411.

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[1] Eschatology is not a category employed by Möhler or the Tübingen school generally, prior to Symbolik. The way to a more eschatological formulation of the "sinful Church--holy Church" question is, however, set by the anthropology of the final edition of Möhler's great work. Its working-out in an eschatological framework built upon that anthropology may be seen in Karl Rahner, e.g., "The Church of Sinners," "The Sinful Church in the Decrees of Vatican II," "The Church and the Parousia of Christ," all in Theological Investigations, 16 vols. to date (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1969), 6:253-312. There is also a study by Anselm Moons, "Die Heiligkeit der Kirche nach J. A. Möhler," Wissenschaft und Weisheit 18 (1955): 81-94 and 175-191, which, although raising some interesting points on this subject, is very weak in terms of placing the question within the larger framework of Möhler's thought.

Church Polity: a Measure of the Change from Einheit to Symbolik

The effects of Möhler's move from pneumatocentrism to Christocentrism in ecclesiology can be very clearly seen in his treatment of ecclesial office in Symbolik. In the first edition Möhler had indicated in his outline of the ecclesiological sections that the hierarchy would be the third and final point discussed, after the visibility of the Church and the activity of Christ which the Church carries on.[1] He himself remarks that "the fundamental insight into the Church as a divine-human institution here confronts us anew in a very explicit way."[2] His indication of that explicit way is in marked contrast with Einheit in der Kirche. In the 1825 work several statements concerning Church office were open to easy misunderstanding. In fact they had been misconstrued by the archbishop of Cologne who, a few years later, on their evidence, blocked Möhler from an appointment to the theology faculty in Bonn. Certainly the statements, if not carefully placed in context with other passages of that first book, can be taken as an indication that the author believed ordination to add nothing but communal approbation to the charismatic qualities of the one ordained.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik^1, p. 265.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:448.

> Ordination, according to its external appearance, is nothing other than the acknowledgment by the whole Church that its spirit is present in a particular believer which renders him apt to represent the love of a specific number of believers and unite them with the whole Church. Thus it is not so much that the Holy Spirit is bestowed in ordination for the first time, as that it is acknowledged that he has bestowed himself previously upon the one being ordained in a special gift.[1]

Similarly he had written that, in the ancient Church, the one chosen to be bishop "is not holier than others because he is a priest, rather he became a priest because he was holier."[2] To be sure, as has been noted earlier, the description of ordination is qualified to the extent that it is specifically stated that this is "according to its external appearance." Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in 1825 Möhler gave much greater prominence to the charismatic designation of the one ordained by his spiritual gifts, his "holiness," than to the community's transmission of power and authority to him.

This is very differently treated now in Symbolik. Because the Church is a "divine-human institution" those who hold office within it must have that office communicated to them in both a divine and human way, not simply a divine bestowal of gift subsequently acknowledged by the human.

> Consequently, for public activities in the Church, for the performance of the magisterium, and the administration of sacraments a divine inner vocation and a higher authorization are required above all. But since the divine and invisible nature of the Church is joined to a

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 221f.

[2] Ibid., p. 182.

> human visible form, so necessarily the vocation given from above must be recognized here below first and then acknowledged, and the heavenly authorization must appear bound to an action performed in the sensible world and carried out in the external Church. That is, the delegation for public ecclesial activity is imparted through a sacrament, an external work to be performed by men in accord with Christ's directive, which partly signifies, partly communicates, an interior divine reality.[1]

This passage does indeed make explicit the way in which the ecclesiology of Symbolik allows Möhler to balance and coordinate the spiritual element in the Church with its external form. That spiritual reality is the necessary operative force; it is required "above all." That force must be discerned by the Church. This seems very much in accord with the position espoused in 1825. But how is it to be discerned? What is the basis of the Church's acknowledgment of the presence of the divine vocation? In Einheit in der Kirche it had been the possession of gifts which served the community of believers. Thus the power to perform the office seemed to be communicated by the Holy Spirit prior to the reception of Orders and, in fact, formed the basis for the Church's decision to ordain the individual. Now, however, the visible demonstration of that divine calling is not the charismatic qualities which enable the Church to decide to ordain, but that decision itself. One does not demand a conclusive proof of the divine authorization for ecclesial office before ordination, for ordination is itself the proof. The basis for such a statement is found in the nature of the Church in which the divine is inseparably but unconfusedly joined to the human. Thus the divine activity must be accompanied by or incarnated in a sensible human action. Thus in any sacrament the divine reality is "partly" communicated by a sensible action. But the divine element is never mixed with the human, or vice versa, and so the same act which from one perspective may be said to communicate that element, from another may be said to signify or acknowledge it.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:449.

The "heavenly authorization," besides being communicated and signified in a human commissioning, must also build upon human foundations. Möhler's identification of the visible sign which prompts the community's acknowledgment of the divine vocation with ecclesiastical ordination itself does not eliminate the need for some sort of indication prior to the reception of the sacrament regarding who should be ordained. In Einheit in der Kirche those prior signs had been the functioning of charismatic gifts of service and leadership showing that the candidate had fully imbibed the Christian Gemeingeist.[1] The preparation for office which Symbolik describes is, however, a very human process of education.

> Since the preservation of the doctrines and institutions of Christ is entrusted to the Church, so it can not honor

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, pp. 181f.

> everyone who says that he has inwardly been anointed a priest as though he were already such. Rather, just as he must first be carefully and rigorously educated and trained in the divine dogma of the Church in order to spread it further, so too he receives through the Church, through its external consecration, the inner consecration from God, i.e., he receives the Holy Spirit through the bishop's imposition of hands.[1]

For the exercise of a ministry within a divine-human Church, education is as important an indication of preparedness as charismatic gifts.

Möhler has argued earlier that, whereas a divine self-communication which "buried itself in men's hearts without assuming the form of a slave, and without appearing in a corporeal way at all"[2] would have required only an internal invisible Church, incarnation demanded a visible institution. That argument is now extended to the sacramental manifestations of that Church and so to its creation of offices and its commissioning of persons to fill those offices. An invisible Church can admit new members by a purely spiritual baptism; their nourishment can be purely spiritual, "we cannot say, 'with the body of Christ,' because 'body' is already reminiscent of an external origin of the Church, but rather, 'with the Logos of God.'" From the second edition on, Möhler continued by noting that an invisible Church could dispense with anything but a purely spiritual sacrifice and a universal priesthood.

It is quite otherwise in a visible Church. This demands

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:450. [2] Ibid., 1:388.

> that the baptism of fire and of the Spirit be likewise a baptism of water, and the nourishment of the soul which Christ provides be made perceptible by a corporal food. Also, in the very idea of such a Church, an external sacrifice is necessarily implied. The same relationship holds as well for priestly ordination: the internal and external consecrations belong together, the heavenly and earthly anointings are united in one.[1]

The Christological model is followed through consistently. The divine and the human are inseparable but unconfused.

But as we have observed in the Christocentric ecclesiology of Symbolik, a visible Church which seeks to give full weight to the human element within it must necessarily emphasize its historicity. If that Church claims to be rooted in the incarnation of the Son, then that which is intrinsic to its existence must also originate in that incarnation. In the section numbered 36 in the final edition of Symbolik, the first devoted to the Catholic doctrine of the Church, Möhler had included "an apostolate found by [Christ] and continuing in an uninterrupted fashion" which is the means of carrying on his redemptive and sanctifying work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the very definition of the Church.[2] There can be no question now, as there had been in 1825, of an office "sketched out" by the historical Jesus which, after this foreshadowing, is brought into existence by the Holy Spirit. In Einheit in der Kirche, Möhler had maintained the divine institution of the episcopacy, but placed that institution after Pentecost since the Church itself only comes into existence with the descent of the Spirit. That position had been implicitly rejected in the first edition of Symbolik, and very explicitly so with the addition in the second of the new section (finally numbered 37) when he states that the community of believers preceded the coming of the Spirit.[1] The episcopacy, the priestly office in general, must find its origin in institution by Christ because the Church finds its institution in Christ and the former is intrinsic to the latter. Such a statement does not necessarily entail a scouring of the New Testament in order to come up with some evidence of a direct dominical institution. Möhler has not rooted the Church in a particular moment of decision on Christ's part, but rather has traced it to the very fact of the incarnation, as something implicit in it. The same can apply to his derivation of ecclesial office and, indeed, of any sacrament from Christ. They are not the result of a decision, but are rather the expansion of a reality. But although he does not seek to demonstrate the historical institution of the episcopacy in the activity of Jesus during his lifetime, it is clear that Möhler supposes such an institution.

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[1] Ibid., 1:449f.

[2] Ibid., 1:387.

> The visibility of the Church and the permanence connected with it demand an ecclesiastical ordination beginning with Christ, its point of origin, and continuing on in

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[1] Ibid., 1:390f.

> unbroken succession, such that, as the apostles were sent forth by the Saviour, they also in turn appointed bishops and these in turn produced successors, and so on down to our day. Especially by this episcopal succession begun by the Saviour and uninterruptedly followed, as by an external mark, is to be recognized which is the true Church founded by him.[1]

This emphasis on stability and unbroken succession in episcopal office raises the issue of the permanent status of particular ecclesiastical offices. In Einheit in der Kirche Möhler had written of a "great flexibility of these forms of unity," a flexibility which he explained as an emphasis on one particular structure at one moment in the Church's history and a recession in that office's importance at another moment. At that point, building the levels of hierarchy from below as expressions of the Christian community's drive toward ever greater unity, he had been concerned with the offices of bishop, metropolitan, and pope.[2] In the second edition of Symbolik, that of 1833, when several significant additions were made to this section on the hierarchy, Möhler made it clear that he no longer regarded the metropolitan as in any way of comparable significance to the bishop or the pope. Metropolitans, archbishops, and patriarchs are not "essential gradations" between the episcopacy and papacy, merely useful administrative levels.[3] But the status of the other two offices, the bishop and the pope, had to be clarified, as well as their relationship to one another. If they are intrinsic to the nature of the Church, as Möhler has claimed in both his first work of 1825 and in Symbolik, and if they are rooted in the historical activity of Christ, then they must have some more fixed importance, some more constant relation. For no longer are they the products of a divinely initiated dynamism working from within which may make use of its various external expressions in different ways at different times. Now they are regarded as the institutions of a divine self-communication from without at a particular moment in history at which they and the Church come into existence.

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[1] Ibid., 1:450f.

[2] Möhler, Einheit, p. 239.

[3] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:454.

The first edition has the following comment in response to this obvious need to clarify the relation between the episcopacy and the papacy.

> The episcopacy is accordingly revered as a divine institution, as is likewise and even for that reason, the pope, the unifying point and head of the episcopate. If the episcopacy is to build a unity complete in itself, joined interiorly as well as externally, in order to unite all believers into a true communal life which the Catholic Church so insistently requires, then it itself needs a center through whose existence all are assembled and joined fast.[1]

This paragraph was retained in succeeding editions. But in the second edition, a year after the first, Möhler sought to explain his ecclesiology at greater length. Thus he added the lengthy new section now numbered 37, and expanded his very brief comment on the episcopacy and the papacy. Some slight further additions were made in the third and fourth editions yielding the text as it now stands.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 297.

Apparently Möhler felt called upon to justify his statement that the episcopacy needs a center if it is to fulfill its task. That task is first described as the unification of the faithful into one communal life. This is a familiar theme from Einheit in der Kirche. Section 37 was added at the same time as this new passage on the papacy and, as we have observed, themes from 1825 are clearly sounded there as well, although they are now transposed into a different context. It is not surprising, therefore, that the necessity of the papal office is demonstrated on the basis of its crucial role in maintaining unity.

> What a helpless, formless mass unable to unite in any common action, must the Catholic Church be, spread over all the kingdoms of the earth, over all parts of the world, if it had no head, no supreme bishop, revered by all! It must necessarily have had to splinter into a countless number of unstable individual churches if a strong and powerful bond had not united them all together, if the successor of Saint Peter had not held them together with firmness. If the universal Church did not have one head instituted by Christ, and if this head did not possess an influence over every one of its members, manifested in acknowledged rights and obligations, then these members, left to themselves, would soon have set themselves in opposition to one another and would have adopted a course of development dependent on purely parochial considerations which would have been for that very reason the way to the dissolution of the whole.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:452.

This could have come from Einheit in der Kirche with some slight modification. Certainly the over-all concern for the unity of believers, a communion which cannot be satisfied in the local church alone, is typical of the 1825 work. The first of two new notes is the clear statement that the "one head" is "instituted by Christ," a phrase added to the sentence in the fourth edition. We have seen that in 1825 the primacy, like other Church offices, was said to be divinely instituted, but only foreshadowed by Christ. The other new note, which is closely related to this first, is the insistence on "constancy." No longer do we hear of the flexibility of hierarchical structures which assume greater or less prominence with relation to one another. There can have been no moment, Möhler seems to imply, when the bond of the papal office did not exert its unifying effect on the local churches. Further, that bond is characterized by "acknowledged rights and obligations" which establish a stable relationship between the papal office and the individual Christian community. The fact that that relationship must, if it is to be influential, carry the qualities of right and obligation, apparently from the very beginning, indicates that Möhler is willing to incorporate the language of law into the dynamics of unifying love and use one to support and illuminate the other. By contrast, in Einheit in der Kirche law was merely the remnant of love, the binding structure left behind when the dynamic Gemeingeist of Christianity had weakened.

But what follows and continues this addition of 1833 places the familiar concern with unity in a perspective which is new in Möhler's thought with Symbolik. Unity is necessary because without it the visibility of the Church would be so weakened as to frustrate its purpose, the maintenance and continuance of revelation.

> There will be no one of so limited intelligence that he should not readily perceive that then (in the separation of local churches mentioned above) the whole authority of the Church in matters of faith would disappear as well, in that those who are opposed to one another could not stand in witness of one and the same thing, but would instead only contradict each other. The whole view which the Catholic Church has of itself as a visible institution supplying the place of Christ would be lost, or rather would never have come into being, without a visible head. A visible head is necessarily posited with a visible Church.[1]

This explicit connection between the primacy and the Church's role as embodied revelation was added to the text at the same time as the statement in the first section on ecclesiology which was noted earlier: "Every great undertaking prospers only in community."[2] There Möhler's point had been that, once it was established that the incarnation required a visible, human means of continuance, that visible, human means must necessarily be a community. Now he furthers that argument by observing that that community cannot fulfill its purpose without visible unity and that, in a human community, that requires a visible head. Thus the incarnation grounds the unity of the Church, and this finally is the foundation for the assertion of the primacy of the pope.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., 1:388.

Thus far it might appear that the primacy exists primarily in terms of the teaching office, since Möhler's demonstration of its necessity derives from the Church as the authoritative proclamation of revelation. He has, however, stated that the influence of the papal office, if it is to be effective, must be exerted through "rights and obligations." He supplies two examples to illustrate his claim that the unity of the Church, and so its ability to function as an authoritative teacher, would be destroyed without a visible head. But in so doing, they also serve to indicate the jurisdictional authority of the primacy as intrinsic to it. The examples adduced are the need for the primacy in the name of the universal Church to have a decisive voice in both the appointment and, if needed, the removal of local bishops. If only the concerns of the local Church were consulted in the creation of ordinaries, men would be appointed who served only those needs, and so individual communities must shortly find themselves at odds with one another. Similarly, the fabric of the Church would be rent if a bishop who abused his office, perhaps even in favor of his particular community, could not be deposed in the name of the whole Church. "But as for the universal Church, what could it do without an organ, and what could that organ do if no one were obliged to obedience?"[1]

The examples chosen are noteworthy, for both rights which Möhler attributes to the papacy as clearly necessary if it is to fulfill its role were prominent in the list of prerogatives to be denied to Rome as false claims in the Febronian system. Almost as if determined not to take too strong a papalist stand, Möhler immediately begins to qualify his position. He states that it is, of course, to be recognized that the rights of the papacy exist only within the ecclesiastical sphere. There is no papal primacy in the political sphere or in secular concerns generally. In the third and fourth editions he explains that the claims advanced in the middle ages for papal prerogatives in the temporal realm are to be understood as a product of "the particular conditions and requirements of the age." Through the third and fourth editions of Symbolik he qualified himself further so that the text which finally remains is summarized thus:

> With the visibility of the Church, with the visible, ordered and established intercommunication of the faithful, with the inner necessity to be members of one body which conditions their existence, a visible head with essential and inalienable rights was accordingly also posited. In addition to his essential ecclesiastical rights, whose limits are to be discovered in the canonists, the pope did indeed gain, at the different cultural stages of whole periods and particular nations, so-called non-essential rights open to various changes, so that his authority appears sometimes greater, sometimes less.[2]

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[1] Ibid., 1:453.

[2] Ibid.

Two elements should be noted. The first is the appeal to the canonists in order to delineate the proper limits of the papacy's authority within the Church. It is interesting to remember that on his visit to Berlin in 1823 Möhler had discussed with Neander a history of the schism of the fourteenth century and the conciliarist movement. Following his return to Tübingen, he had initially plunged into the principal theorists of conciliarism and their roots in the medieval canonists before abandoning the project in favor of Einheit in der Kirche. But his studies had led him, he admitted in that first book, to question whether any primacy was necessary to the Church at all.[1] Apparently those studies in canon law, which, of course, he had taught when he first arrived in Tübingen, had not lost their effect on him even in 1834, the year of Symbolik's third edition in which the phrase first appeared.

The second point to be observed is the explanation of the varied exercise of papal power in different times and places. In 1825 he had written of the flexibility of the forms of the hierarchy, indicating that as one becomes more influential the others simultaneously become less so.[2] Then this phenomenon had been explained as the Christian Gemeingeist meeting new exigencies within the Church's surroundings as any living organism adapts itself to changes in its environment. Now Möhler is careful to emphasize that the changes are in the "so-called non-essential rights" and that these are "open to various changes." The essential rights are inalienable, however, and so are not subject to arbitrary limitation. Furthermore, the papal authority which "appears sometimes greater, sometimes less" is not the authority of the office in regard to ecclesiastical matters. Thus the relationship between the papacy and the episcopacy is not open to historical change in the same way as the relationship between the papacy and the secular realm.

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[1] Möhler, Einheit, p. 227.

[2] Ibid., p. 239.

Does this mean that Möhler has now rejected the idea of any change or development in the relationship of the hierarchical offices? Are they now set in a clear relationship of authority and subordination? Möhler addresses this issue in a striking fashion.

> Further, it is known that, called into being partially by the revolution of time and the abuses of the Church, and brought about partially by the inner process of development of concepts carried forward by way of antitheses, two systems regarding the relationship between the pope and the bishops became dominant, the episcopal and the papal systems, the latter of which, without denying the divine institution of bishops, emphasized especially the power of the center, while the former, without gainsaying the divine foundation of the primacy, sought particularly to draw power toward the periphery. In that each thus acknowledged the divine nature of the other, they provided for the life of the Church very useful antitheses such that through their counterbalancing action not only has the characteristic free development of the parts been preserved, but their unification into an unbreakable and living whole has also been maintained.[1]

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:453f.

This remarkable passage indicates Möhler's concern for balancing what he saw as complementary views even within a divinely instituted Church taking its origin in the historical reality of the incarnation. Its strength may perhaps be observed best by noticing what appears to be its weakness, its refusal to be precise.

That lack of precision was fastened upon by Baur.

> On what the divine institution of the episcopate rests, with what right the papacy with all its claims places itself above the episcopacy, in what relation these two systems stand to one another which do not simply exist side by side but are also mutually opposed, on which side truth is to be found if, as has happened often enough and as can always happen again, they break into open conflict with one another, how the infallibility of dogmatic formulations fares if the entire episcopacy is not united with its universal center (which moreover in fact never is the case), whether, as the papal system claims, the pope is already infallible in himself, and how the contradiction is to be resolved that a human individual is regarded as the infallible organ of the Church to whose authority everyone else's faith must be unconditionally subject--about all these as well as other questions nothing is said. We offer no opinion as to what reasons may have led the author to touch so fleetingly on the doctrine of the papacy. If it is lofty reverence before the holy apostolic office, that divine authority which "presses the seal of the divine upon the obedient son who does it honor" and which receives perhaps a yet more perfect demonstration of that obedience through silence than through speech, it is a wise observance of the example of the council of Trent which also seems to have regarded the Holy See as too sacred for any discussion of its claims, or if it is perhaps a discreet condescension to Protestants who would be unable to appreciate here the sensitivity and subtlety of Catholic dogma, whether for these or other reasons, there can be no reasons for this silence, whatever they may be, which are sufficient in a frank study of symbolics, as the author terms his own. And the Protestant can consequently perceive in the absolute silence of the author only the admission that there

> are in the Catholic system doctrines about which the wisest course is to be quiet.[1]

The questions which Baur thinks Möhler should answer are indeed important ones. But is it true that they go unanswered in Symbolik?

Certainly one question seems to be answered, that regarding the claim of the papal system that the pope is infallible in matters of faith quite apart from the concurrence of the episcopal college, that he is, in the phrase which the first Vatican council would later employ, infallible *ex sese*. Möhler seems, in fact, if one can draw any conclusion regarding this notion of papal infallibility from Symbolik, to be opposed to it. In 1833, at the same time as he expanded his remarks on the hierarchy and included his statement about the complementary antitheses of the papal and episcopal systems, he added what finally became section 37 in which he writes:

> To no individual as such does this inerrancy apply. For the Catholic always envisions the individual only as a member of the whole, as living and breathing in it, which is apparent from what has been said up to this point. Feeling, thinking, and willing in its spirit, alone is he thus infallible.[2]

This seems to be the basis for Baur's observation that any idea which states that "a human being is regarded as the infallible organ of the Church to whose authority everyone else's faith must be unconditionally subject" is a contradiction within Möhler's work. The context of the statement which seems to rule out personal infallibility, however, is very different from that in which the papacy is treated. In the first case Möhler is not dealing with ecclesial office but with the individual believer *qua* individual. He is concerned to retrieve themes characteristic of *Einheit in der Kirche* and indicate their place in the Christocentric ecclesiology of *Symbolik*. And so he returns to his emphasis on the community as necessary for human beings to be truly human. In the incarnational framework of this ecclesiology being truly human is the prerequisite for being truly related to the divine. Subsequently he uses this theme in *Symbolik* and again in *Neue Untersuchungen* to reject what he sees as the destructive effects of Protestant individualism which finally renders revelation purely subjective. So he writes:

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[1] Baur, Der Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus, pp. 364f.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:392.

> If the Church were to depict the relation of the individual to the whole in the opposite sense and imagine him infallible as an individual, it would then negate the concept of community. For this can be understood as necessary only when true faith and pure and deep Christian life can not be thought of in individualization.[1]

But this is not at all how Möhler conceives of the papal office. The pope is not an individual but the embodiment of unity, the center of the episcopacy and so of the whole community. It is the pope *qua* pope who is infallible, not the pope as an individual believer.[1] Regarding the infallibility of the Church's magisterium he writes:

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[1] Ibid.

> The dogmatic decisions of the episcopate (united with its universal center) are infallible, for it represents the universal Church, and one doctrine of faith taught by it falsely would deliver the whole up to

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[1] There has been a wearisome and pointless debate on the question whether Möhler is in full agreement with the dogmatic constitution *Pastor aeternus* of Vatican I, not issued until thirty-two years after his death. Johannes Friedrich, who had been Cardinal Hohenlohe's *peritus* at the council, an ally of Döllinger whose principal co-worker he was on the "Letters" of Quirinus, and who wrote a massive history of the council after his excommunication for his refusal to accept its decrees, maintained that "the shining name of Möhler does not belong in the Vatican camp"; see Vigener, *Drei Gestalten aus dem modernen Katholizismus*, p. 73. Vigener himself concluded that although Möhler did belong to the opponents of the dogma in its development, he could never have been counted among its opponents in the final form it achieved at Vatican I; ibid. Others, however, see Möhler as the clear forerunner of *Pastor aeternus*. Alois von Schmid, for example, wrote, "The fundamental insight, already set forth in his earliest work, of the power of unity having attained its highest expression in the primacy would then have evolved to the point at which it found its dogmatic pronouncement in the third and fourth chapters of the Vatican decree *de ecclesia*," "Der geistige Entwicklungsgang Johann Adam Möhlers," *Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft* 18 (1897): 354. A. Minon also believed that "the theology of the papacy has scarcely made any progress since Möhler," "L'attitude de Jean-Adam Möhler (1796-1838) dans la question du développement du dogme," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 16 (1939): 350. Cf. also Hermann Josef Pottmeyer, *Unfehlbarkeit und Souveränität: Die päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit im System der ultramontanen Ekklesiologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1975), pp. 222-236.

It is certainly true, without trying to guess what Möhler himself would have thought had he been able to peer into the future, that the explanation in the definition of papal infallibility of the phrase *ex cathedra, id est, cum omnium Christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit* is the precise meaning which I understand Möhler to have of the pope as a "corporate person." Cf. Denzinger-Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion symbolorum*, 23rd ed. (1963), n. 3074.

> error. Therefore, if the institution which Christ has erected for the preservation and explanation of his truth has been made subject in this function to no error, then neither is the organ through which the Church speaks.[1]

It was this which excited Baur's question about situations in which the episcopal college is not united with its "universal center." Can the Church then speak infallibly? If so, does this attribute of infallibility which the doctrine enjoys come from the papacy or the episcopacy?

It may at first glance appear that Möhler, in the paragraph quoted, is concerned primarily with the episcopacy. It is true that in this citation he equates the episcopacy, in union with the pope, with "the organ through which the Church speaks." Just before this, however, in the lengthy paragraph added in the second edition, he refers to the papacy as the organ of the universal Church. Baur's demand is that he make up his mind, that he state clearly which one is the organ of the Church through which the whole body speaks.

But Möhler's precise point is that they counterbalance one another. So intent is he on this that, in a note, also new in the 1833 edition, he refers to the conciliarist positions, "the most general formulations of the episcopal system," as contained in the councils of Constance and Basel:

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:454.

> They say that the pope is subordinate to a general council, lawfully convoked and representing the Church militant--a disproportionate position which, consistently followed through, threatened the Church with destruction. This crude view can be regarded as one presently abandoned.[1]

Thus he carefully preserves the pope from being made subservient to the bishops united in council. Yet he makes certain that the total episcopacy, when united to the pope, is infallible. He states definitely in that paragraph added in the second edition that the papal office is of dominical institution. Yet in his reply to Baur in Neue Untersuchungen he repeats that the office of bishop was also founded by Christ.[2] The seeming lack of precision in his willingness to set the episcopal and papal systems side by side as checks one upon the other, a decision which Baur had seen as an indication that he found the two inconsistent with one another but could not on the basis of official Catholic teaching resolve that tension, is obviously a deliberate move on Möhler's part. It is a significant move because it is an indication of how fully human the divine-human community is.

Infallibility, authority in teaching, binding power in disciplinary decisions--all this must belong to the Church if it is indeed to function in the place of Christ and act as the continuing embodiment of an historical revelation and self-communication of the divine. Such a visible Church needs, Möhler has argued, a visible organ of teaching. But the attributes of that teaching, infallibility, authority, etc., are in fact divine attributes which are given to the visible human organ by way of the communicatio idiomatum. That communication of attributes is possible only between two natures hypostatically joined, i.e., inseparable but unmixed, each nature bound to the other but each fully integral in itself. Accordingly one can speak of the visible human element in the Church as infallible, but that element still remains fully and distinctively human, subject to the demands of history and to the human interplay of forces and factors which, held in tension, lead to growth and development. Within a human community each individual member must seek to develop his full and unique capacity. That process of individual maturation is, however, inextricably linked to and parallel with the expansion and enrichment of the community at large. This is in accord with his insistence in section 37, also added at this time, on the correspondence between the Catholic view of the Church and the needs of man's will for its cultivation.

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[1] Ibid., 1:454, n. 5.

[2] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen² (Mainz and Vienna, 1835), p. 389.

> The more cultured and humane the men within a state are, the more are they bound by wise ordinances, holy laws, venerable customs and usages which prudently ground the interplay of rights and duties so that, in fact, with each higher stage of interior freedom the exterior bonds likewise grow in proportion. By contrast, the greater the barbarism, so also the greater

> independence, so that the most savage person is, physically viewed, the freest as well.[1]

In any human community, then, two concerns must co-exist: the free development of each member and each sub-community and the ever more central and clearly expressed authority of the community as a whole. Far from destroying one another, they are in a direct proportion to one another. Each must be protected, neither sacrificed to the other, if the community is to be fully "humane."

This pattern is not foreign to the Church. Indeed it cannot be if the Church is fully a human community as well as fully the creation of the divine, if, in other words, it is truly the continuance of the incarnational structure established by God's self-communication in Christ. Therefore, the Church must also exhibit these two concerns and exhibit them in some organized visible way. That is precisely what Möhler means by his statement that the papal and episcopal systems provide "very useful antitheses" within the Church's life. The former emphasizes "the power of the center," the ties binding the total community more and more closely into one; the latter seeks "to draw power toward the periphery" so that the "characteristic free development of the parts" may be furthered. Each recognizes the other as divinely instituted.[1] This is not the crafty claim of someone seeking to remain carefully non-committal, as Baur suspected. Indeed, Baur's inability to see how Möhler could be anything other than duplicitous in maintaining both systems side by side is an interesting evidence of precisely the fundamental flaw which Möhler charged against Protestant theology in his day--its refusal to maintain the natural as natural in the face of the supernatural. Rather it is fully to be expected that within this divinely worked union of divine and human elements which is the Church, there must be divine institutions of authority and leadership corresponding to the requirements of a community which, while divine, remains thoroughly and integrally human.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:403.

Indications of What Might Have Been: the Munich Church History Notes, 1837-38

If it is true that Möhler's ecclesiology is a function of his way of formulating the relation of the infinite and the finite, the God-man relation, then one might well have expected some changes in the ecclesiological sections of Symbolik in the fifth edition had he lived to complete his revisions. For, as was observed in the previous chapter, the fifth edition proved a decisive step forward in his resolution of that great question of the interplay between the divine and the human. He had come to a position where he could hold them in relationship without collapsing either one into the other. He had avoided putting man into an "irrational relation" to an "infinite vocation," and so protected the full freedom of God and the full integrity of creation. We are entitled, then, to ask whether there is any indication of what effect this might have had upon his views on the nature of the Church and in what direction his ecclesiological thinking might have gone had he survived a longer time.

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[1] Geiselmann draws attention (ibid., 2:755) to a very insightful comment of Roger Aubert, "La géographie ecclésiologique au XIXe siècle," L'ecclésiologie au XIXe siècle (Paris, 1960), p. 30: "They [i.e., German theologians] opposed [papal absolutism] not only for theological and historical reasons (ab initio non erat sic), but also and perhaps especially in the name of a German conception of authority and society, less permeated by Roman law, more patriarchal and corporate, which saw the relation between pope and bishops in the more organicist perspective of the Holy Roman Empire in which the sovereign and the great feudal lords collaborated in the diet." So Möhler could have well accepted the dogmatic decree on papal primacy and infallibility from Vatican I, if it had been accompanied by a similar dogmatic statement on the divine character of the episcopacy.

If any answer can be given to that question it must be found in the notes of his Church history lectures which he gave in Munich in the winter semester of 1837-1838. He had officially been appointed to the Munich faculty in June, 1835, but had in fact moved to the Bavarian capital two months previously, once he had been assured that the announcement was forthcoming. Tübingen had become more and more unpleasant for him because of the increasingly acrimonious exchange with Baur. But Munich did not prove any happier because of the quick deterioration of his always frail health. He was stricken with cholera in 1836 which left him weaker than ever. In 1837 repeated bouts with influenza forced him to cancel his lectures. It was increasingly obvious that he would have to surrender his teaching position. He was appointed a canon of the cathedral of Würzburg, a position which would have relieved him of any financial insecurity in leaving his professorship, but on April 12, 1838, before he was able to leave Munich, Möhler died, twenty-four days before his forty-second birthday. Thus these notes for his lectures of that final semester in Munich, together with two brief journal articles of the first two months of 1838, protesting the anti-Catholic cabinet ordinances in Prussia,[1] are the last records of his thought.

Reference has been made in the previous chapter to the careful relation of nature and supernature in these notes, following upon the formulation at which Möhler had arrived in his last edition of Symbolik, the project on which he was working as he prepared these lectures on Church history. In the second section of the notes, entitled, "Of the Concepts of Christian History, the History of the Christian Church, and the Division of its Material," he gives a most interesting definition.

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[1] J. A. Möhler, Münchener politische Zeitung, January 29-30, 1838, pp. 149-151, 154-156; and February 15-17, 1838, pp. 241-242, 254-256. The first article was republished in Allgemeine Zeitung (Stuttgart and Augsburg), February 7-10, 1838, pp. 303-304, 319-320, 327-328. Both

> Under Christian history in contrast to pre-Christian and non-Christian, we understand the introduction of the Spirit of Christ into the whole life of mankind under his influence, or again, the unfolding of the Christian spirit and its development in families, nations, and states, in art and science, for the purpose of transforming all these organs for God's glorification. What does not exist as means or organ for this purpose is accordingly not yet permeated by the Christian spirit.
>
> Distinct from this concept of Christian history, however, is the concept of the history of the Christian Church. Specifically the Christian Church is that from which all these activities proceed on all sides, as though it were the hearth from which sparks are ever flying out to kindle a higher divine life on every side for the glory of God. That which touches immediately upon this institution of God, the variations, circumstances, and events which immediately affect it, this will be the subject of Church history. Christ has specifically instituted a community in which the human race to be redeemed by him appears. This is the community which we call Church, Ecclesia. It is now very directly the history of this community which Christian Church history treats.[1]

Previously he had defined history as God's eternal plan which is developed in time together with man himself, which has as its goal the creation through Christ of God's own glory in which man freely acquiesces.[2] God's plan enters time and is developed in collaboration with humanity. It cannot be created in any other fashion because its fulfillment will be found only in mankind's free assent to God's glory. What is that "glory"?

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articles are reprinted under the title "Ueber die neueste Bekämpfung der katholischen Kirche," in Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:226-243.

[1] Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:271f.

[2] Ibid., 2:263.

> Holy scripture constantly returns to this, that the object of the creation of the world is nothing other than the worship and praise of God. For who does not know the words of the psalm: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory"? Or who does not know so many hymns and psalms of the Church end with the words, "Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit"? By this nothing less is proclaimed than that all things must unite in the glorification of God.

And a few lines later Möhler adds that what scripture announces, reason too discovers.

> As everything proceeds from him, so everything returns to him; as the whole finite world is a revelation of his Being, i.e. precisely of his inner glory, so is it also the highest vocation of rationally endowed and free creation to proclaim this with consciousness and self-possession.[1]

The glory of God is his self-gift. His glory, his inner Being, is revealed in the fact of finite creation, and what that fact reveals is that there is no intrinsic necessity that it exist. The fact that it does, is, therefore, the ultimate statement of God's purely gratuitous goodness and love. Man's free, conscious recognition of that is his acceptance of the relation in which he stands to the divine. If this is the highest vocation of rationally endowed and free creation, it is also the goal of history. It is the God-man relation freely embraced by both poles, not just by the divine pole which initiates it. In this all creation is fulfilled.

> One half of creation worships God immediately through the fact that it is and in the way that it is. For, as it seems to us, unconscious creation displays before

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[1] Ibid., 2:264.

> us in everything the image of the divine majesty--even if now, after the fall, somewhat veiled. But the other half of creation, the free and conscious part, should do with free self-determination what that other part performs in simple necessity.[1]

In man all creation voices its acceptance or rejection of its relation with the infinite. But man has in fact refused that vocation by refusing the God-man relation. That refusal was the expression of man's desire to collapse the poles into one another, his will to cancel the relationship and affirm a simple identity. "He wanted to become like God, and by that very fact the purpose of his existence was denied." Man's ability to recognize and accept the God-man relation is the work of Christ, and that work is carried on by the Church.

What is so striking in this is the way in which the Church is placed in this framework which is entirely in accord with Möhler's way of formulating the God-man relation in the fifth and final revision of Symbolik. For the Church is not the realization of that relationship, it is the means to that end. The full realization of the God-man polarity, its acceptance by the human pole consciously and freely, is the goal, not only of Church history, but of universal history. The Church is the center from which the activity of the Spirit enters the world. The Christian community is the *locus* of the Spirit, so long as by that is meant the center of the Spirit's power. But the boundaries of that community are the not limits of the Spirit's reach. Indeed the Spirit's presence in the Church is not for the Church, but for the world at large. For his aim is not the formation and maintenance of a community of believers but penetration into "families, nations, and states, in art and science, for the purpose of transforming all these organs for God's glorification." If the Church is the center of the Spirit's blaze, it is so that "sparks are ever flying out to kindle a higher divine life on every side for the glory of God."

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[1] Ibid., 2:265.

This is not a new ecclesiology, but it is a new emphasis within the ecclesiology which Möhler had attained in the first four editions of Symbolik. It is not a new formulation of the nature of the Church which is advanced in the Church history notes of the last few months of his life, but a new approach to the Church's mission. The question has shifted from "what?" to "why?" No longer is the Church's role treated as it had been in Symbolik's ecclesiological sections. In that work's first edition he had written that he would discuss the Church under three headings: its visibility, its task, and its hierarchy. The second of these was described as "the actions of Christ to be continued in it, in which the unique task of the Church consists." The actions of Christ--those of prophet, priest, and king--are maintained in the Church. But the proper understanding of the second and third of these roles is that they are functions of the first. "In a word, the question concerning the second point [i.e., the Church's work] is how according to the Catholic view true knowledge of the whole economy of salvation in Christ Jesus is obtained, or to discuss the doctrine of scripture and tradition."[1] In the final text of the chapter devoted to the Church, that of the fourth edition, five sections are devoted precisely to that question, the relationship of scripture and tradition. The Church's activity, which can be effectively dealt with in such a fashion, is essentially intramural. The Church's energies are and should be directed toward its members in this view.

Now, however, the object of the Church has shifted outside its boundaries. The center of its attention is the world, humanity at large. Section 37 of Symbolik, the lengthy section added in the second edition, had spoken of the Church as satisfying man's needs on the levels of intellect, will, and sensitivity. Thus the idea of the Church as the perfection of humanity's deepest capacities is not altogether new. But there is a distinctive note in the description of the Church's role in the accomplishment of the divine plan when Möhler writes that "Christ has specifically instituted a community in which the human race to be redeemed by him appears." This is the vision of a Church which is raised up as a sign, not for those within, but for those outside. The basis has been laid for an ecclesiology of service and mission. Symbolik's section 37 had assumed that man would enter the community of faith and so discover who he is. The Church history notes of 1837-1838 imply that the Church must enable man first to discover who he is and that then that discovery will lead him into the community of believers.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik[1], p. 265.

To be sure these notes yield only hints and suggestions of a new direction in Möhler's ecclesiological thinking, one built on what he had written in the various editions of Symbolik and Neue Untersuchungen. But the direction which can be discerned is not totally unexpected. Indeed, after the new clarity of his formulation of the God-man relation in the fifth edition of Symbolik and the results which his concern with the infinite-finite polarity had had in his ecclesiological development in the thirteen years since the publication of Einheit in der Kirche, it could have been anticipated that some significant effects would be seen in his views of the Church. The integrity of the finite as finite, the possibility, indeed the absolute necessity, for man to be neither more nor less than man while still the recipient of God's self-gift, which he had finally been able to affirm with systematic consistency in the final edition of Symbolik, could have led Möhler to a renewed interest in the human community simply as a human community, with its possibilities for responding to divine self-communication.

The Church would then be addressed to this as a human community with those possibilities realized, a conscious sign to the world of what the world is or could be unconsciously. Whether this is what the ecclesiology of Symbolik's last edition would have been is a moot point. But the Church history notes, written while those final revisions were being made, point in that direction.

CONCLUSION

RESPONSES AND AN ESTIMATION

The development of Möhler's ecclesiology moves in two stages which are clearly distinguished by the organizing principle employed in each: pneumatocentrism in the first, Christocentrism in the second. But each stage with its distinctive way of formulating the nature of the Church is, in fact, a response to a problem which he regarded as crucial for the Catholic community in Germany. The first is the reconciliation of the religious awakening which, in Catholic circles, found its intellectual counterpart in the *Erlebnistheologie* associated with Sailer, and the historical Church structure with its liturgical and doctrinal forms and its magisterium. No one was less in sympathy with the chilly moralistic religious outlook of the *Aufklärung* than Möhler, and so the task of maintaining a revived religious life built upon personal piety and the experience of the indwelling Spirit was congenial. But that religious style had already begun to evidence its instability and sectarian tendency by the second decade of the nineteenth century, the time when the young Möhler pursued his studies at Ellwangen and Tübingen and Rottenburg. That tendency could be corrected by incorporating it into the structures of the hierarchical Church. Not only would that provide the stability which personal devotion desperately needed, but it was the only way by which the movement of revival could be maintained as Catholic. On the other hand, the ecclesiastical institution itself had been in large part uprooted in Germany. The old episcopalist structures built around the great metropolitans were shattered. The papacy, so ineffectual throughout the eighteenth century, had weathered the storms of the revolution and the Napoleonic decades and emerged with a new moral strength. Thus the Catholic Church in Germany required a new ecclesiological theory to support a new ecclesiastical situation. The strength of the Catholic religious revival in Württemberg, Bavaria, and Austria especially was exactly _the_ transfusion needed to give new life to the moribund remnants of institutional Catholicism so that it could begin to adapt to its new situation. It was in response to this, to provide the necessary mediation of the Catholic awakening and the structured Church, supplying for the weakness of each while making use of the strength of both, that _Einheit in der Kirche_ was written.

In that brilliant first work itself the seed was planted of the second stage of development. In responding to the demands of the Catholic situation of his time, Möhler turned for support to the idealist philosophy, particularly that of Schelling, which Drey had placed at the base of Catholic theology, and to the most extraordinary of his Protestant contemporaries, Schleiermacher, whose own work was an attempt to hold together a non-rational base for religion with the inherited tradition of a community. But in making use of Schelling's method and Schleiermacher's God-man relation, the conviction emerged that the very substratum of the experience itself, relationship, was being destroyed and identity put in its place. In 1825 the attempt had been to relate individual religious experience to that of the community. In the second stage of his career Möhler's concern was to balance the divine and human elements in any religious experience, whether of the individual or the community. The pattern of the God-man relation is necessarily reflected in the way in which the divine and human elements are joined in the Church. The final and best balanced statement of the God-man polarity is in the fifth edition of Symbolik. The ecclesiological revisions which would have accompanied it were never written, although the progress in the way of formulating the Church is evident from the first four editions. And some idea may be gleaned from the 1837-1838 Church history lecture notes of what ecclesiology after Symbolik's last edition might have looked like.

No Catholic work of the nineteenth century provoked so many rejoinders from such distinguished theologians as

Symbolik. In addition to Baur, Karl Immanuel Nitsch of the University of Bonn and Philipp Konrad Marheineke of Berlin both wrote books in response. Perhaps the most significant Catholic criticism came from Anton Günther in Vienna.[1] Of these Baur's is certainly the most interesting and the most thorough. It was not simply the fact that they were at the same university which prompted Möhler to reply at such length to Baur, rather it was that his criticisms were the ones that nettled.

Two other distinguished figures, one of Möhler's century and one of our own, have made especially interesting observations which bear upon Möhler's ecclesiology-- D. F. Strauss and Karl Barth. Strauss's comment is merely a brief remark: "So Möhler could derive the sole—redemptive Popish Church with no greater difficulty from the Christian consciousness than Schleiermacher could his Redeemer. He could give the Christian consciousness a form, in which it seemed interchangeable with the modern principle of progress."[2] Barth's is part of a longer critique of the Catholic understanding of tradition which uses the Tübingen school as an example.[1] It will prove helpful to examine these critiques in concluding this investigation of Möhler's ecclesiological development.

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[1] P. K. Marheineke, Über D. J. A. Möhlers Symbolik oder Darstellung der dogmatischen Gegensätze (Berlin, 1833); A. Günther, Der letzte Symboliker. Eine durch die symbolische Werke Doctor J. A. Möhler's und Doctor F. C. Baur's veranlasste Schrift (Vienna, 1834).

[2] D. F. Strauss, Gesammelte Schriften, 12 vols. (Bonn, 1876-1877), 2:222, quoted in K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, trans. G. T. Thomson and H. Knight (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1956), 1-2:563.

Baur, Strauss, and Barth agree in their basic stance toward Möhler. All agree that he has bought deeply into the intellectual world of his time and especially has taken over his most basic and characteristic positions from Schleiermacher. Baur, however, regarded this as an attempt to defend a Catholicism which in fact was a creation of Möhler himself, at odds with the Catholic doctrinal viewpoints enshrined, for example, in the Tridentine decrees. Möhler had been rankled by this charge of "Schleiermacherizing" five years before Symbolik and had claimed that what appeared distinctive in Schleiermacher was the latter's "Catholicizing" tendencies.[2] Barth agrees with Möhler wholeheartedly.

> It was really a waste of time for Protestant critics of Möhler's system to accuse him of "Schleiermacherising" and to charge him with transmuting Catholic doctrine. Möhler himself had already given the answer: Why should we not speak rather of a catholicising of Schleiermacher?; which means that we have to weigh the possibility that in availing himself of his ideas and formulations, Möhler did represent Catholic doctrine, and in doing so understood Schleiermacher at the deepest possible level and rightly applied him in this way. And do we not have to admit that he is right? The Catholic and the idealistic interpretation of Christian history both do go back to the same conception. They are at one

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[1] Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1-2:560-572.

[2] Theologische Quartalschrift 9 (1827): 514f.

> in what ultimately emerges and is expressed in Möhler: in the identity of the Church and its faith and its Word with the revelation which is its basis.[1]

Barth, then, sees Möhler as being in the mainstream of Catholic thought. Baur and others who pointed to his resemblance to Schleiermacher were right, but merely displaying their own misinterpretation of the great Berlin theologian. They failed to recognize what Möhler, "who knew Schleiermacher particularly well," saw at once: at bottom Schleiermacher, like idealist thinkers in general, was Catholic. If anything Möhler is "a definite Catholic improvement on Schleiermacher."[2]

But our question must be not whether Baur understood Schleiermacher, but whether Barth understands Möhler. Both the Catholic in Tübingen and the Protestant in Berlin "started from the distinction between faith and doctrine, spirit and letter, hidden root and visible shoot, pious self-consciousness and outward ecclesiasticism in the life of the Church, i.e., of revelation." Möhler's advance on Schleiermacher, according to Barth, is that "the two elements are now shown to be originally co-ordinated with each other, so that the Catholic conclusion that we must listen to the Church can now be understood *a priori* from within."[3] That is an excellent statement of Möhler's achievement in

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[1] Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 1-2:563.

[2] Ibid., 1-2:561.

[3] Ibid.

Einheit in der Kirche. Barth, however, seems unaware that the perspective of the 1825 work and that of the later Möhler in Symbolik are very different. He quotes from the two books indiscriminately, with no attempt to place the citations in their very dissimilar contexts. Thus what Barth depicts as Möhler's final result is "the identity of the Church and its faith and its Word with the revelation which is its basis." That revelation is, however, divine self-communication. Consequently, according to Barth, Möhler holds to the final identity of the Church with the divine. If he were referring only to Einheit in der Kirche, he might very well be correct, for, as we observed, Möhler is hard put to maintain the distinction between the Christian Gemeingeist and the Holy Spirit. In 1825 there was the possibility of simply making the Church into the incarnate Spirit. But as we have seen, from Athanasius der Grosse on, Möhler's entire effort is taken up with the attempt to preserve the integrity of the divine and the human. Thus Symbolik moves from the Church as the incarnate Spirit to the incarnate Son as the basis of the Church precisely because the traditional Chalcedonian understanding of hypostatic union allows the Church to be fully human as well as divine.

Now, one may well shift the question. Perhaps Barth has simplified the issue and failed to distinguish the various stages of Möhler's developing thought on the

Church. But having granted that Möhler recognized the same danger to which Barth points and tried to counter it, one can ask whether he succeeded. Certainly he carefully preserved the integrity of the human within the Church. The Christian community is thoroughly human, as can be seen in its organization on the two balancing principles of episcopalism and papalism. But Barth, here in agreement with Baur, sees this as a mere inconsistency in Möhler's working through of his ecclesiology. It was simply that "the question had not yet been finally made clear, where that Church which is identical with revelation, i.e., where that mouth which declares revelation, where that authority of the Church which is identical with the authority of the Word of God, has to be sought and heard in concreto."[1] For despite having tried to distinguish the divine and human elements in the Church, has Möhler not simply identified the Church with God's self-communication in Christ when he calls it "the Son of God appearing among men in human form in an ongoing fashion, constantly renewed, eternally rejuvenated, his lasting incarnation, just as the faithful are also called in holy scripture the body of Christ?"[2]

There can be no question that Möhler at first sight leaves himself open to this charge of identifying Christ and the Church. His student, Johannes Evangelist Kuhn, "speculatively the most gifted of the Catholic Tübingen school in the nineteenth century," admitted that this could seem "a dogmatic exaggeration."[1] But is this what Möhler really says?

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[1] Ibid., 1-2:565. [2] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:389.

Geiselmann points[2] to an interesting statement on the relation between Christ and the Church made in the first edition of Symbolik in 1832 and retained in all the subsequent editions. It is found in what was finally numbered section 34 in the chapter preceding that on the Church. Möhler is discussing the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist and the Mass.

> But now to develop more clearly the Catholic perspective we must anticipate a few remarks in the treatment of the Church. Viewed from one aspect, the Church is, in the fashion of a living image [auf eine abbildlich-lebendige Weise], Christ manifesting himself and working through all ages, whose redemptive and salvific activities it consequently eternally preserves and continues uninterruptedly.[3]

The Church is not identified with Christ, it functions for Christ as his living image. It is the tool which Christ employs in his work of redemption. That is, of course, further strengthened by the ecclesiological sections themselves. When writing of the incarnation as the ultimate ground of the Church's visibility, Möhler states, "This was decisive for the character of those means through which the Son of God after his withdrawal from the eyes of the world would still work in the world and for the world."[1] The Church is clearly an instrument in which and through which Christ's activity is continued. To be such an instrument, however, it must be suited to its task. That task is the re-establishment of the proper God-man relation and so requires as its means a visible society in which the divine and the human elements are related in that proper balance, inseparable but unmixed. The instrument then must be modeled upon Christ, as indeed every human being must be related to God in accord with the model of the relationship of the divine and human natures in Christ. As that does not mean that every Christian is an instance of hypostatic union, so neither does it follow that the Church is an incarnation of the divine.

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[1] J. E. Kuhn, Katholische Dogmatik, 1-1: Einleitung in die katholische Dogmatik, 2nd ed. (Tübingen, 1859), p. 101, n. 1. The judgment on Kuhn is that of Franz Wolfinger, "Johannes Evangelist Kuhn," Katholische Theologen Deutschlands im 19. Jahrhundert, 2:129.

[2] Möhler, Symbolik, 2:633f.

[3] Ibid., 1:353.

The clearest demonstration that Möhler did not intend the Church to be understood as itself an incarnation is his ready admission of the presence of evil in the Church. As was noted in the foregoing chapter, he recognized the legitimacy of the question whether he had ever moved from the level of the ideal to the real in his description of the

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[1] Ibid., 1:388.

Church. True, however, to his background in Schelling by way of Drey, he rejected the separation of the two levels. Catholics know, he wrote, "that the idea is not the common reality, and *vice versa*; but they also know that, where no idea lies at the foundation of the real, there is as little truth as where nothing real corresponds to the idea."[1] The idea in question is a Church in which the divine and human are united inseparably but unconfusedly, a Church modeled upon the incarnation. If that Church is not "real," if it is not in some way realized in the world, then there is no Church at all, and the redeeming work of Christ grinds to a halt. But the Church which does exist and which is the realization of that "ideal" Church is not a *perfect* realization of it. That fact invalidates neither, for the existing Church which is not in some measure the realization of the ideal has no truth, and the ideal Church which has no correspondence in reality has no existence. But the admission that the Church is not the full and perfect realization of the ideal is the admission that the human element in the Church is not perfectly coordinated to the divine as yet. For in Christ, who has been made like us in all things except sin, human nature is perfectly responsive in its relationship with the divine. In the Church the human element, united with the divine on the model of the relationship established in Christ, is not, however, sinless. Möhler's willingness to admit this means that he does not intend the Church to be understood as in fact being a divine incarnation, but rather as analogous to the incarnation.

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[1] Ibid., 1:408.

If it is true that Barth's reading of Möhler is understandable, as Kuhn's comment indicates that such a reading was made within a few years of *Symbolik*'s publication, it is also true that a more careful reading revealed to others his true intention. Giovanni Perrone recognized this very explicitly within a decade of Möhler's death.

> Non defuerunt tamen qui, ulterius progressi, sibi in Ecclesia quamdam veluti Incarnationis continuationem videre visi sunt. Justa hos, Christus Deus-Homo voluit in ea perfectam sui imaginem ac similitudinem relinquere, in qua et per quam ipsemet vivere quodammodo videretur, ac nobiscum etiam post visibilem suum in coelum ascensum conversari. Haec propterea societas, Christum prae se ferens, ut ipsi loquuntur, divino-humana est, subsistens in *unitate* personae cum utriusque naturae *communicatione*; quo fit ut elementum, ut vocant divinum pervadat ac penetret elementum humanum, ipsumque regat ac dirigat, alat ac veluti informet, unitatemque ex utroque constituat. Quod divinum in hac persona morali seu societate inesse dicunt, constituit partem ejus formam exteriorem ac visibilem sive corpus, quo velut organo anima exterius se prodit ac manifestat. . . .
>
> Dummodo haec rite intelligantur, prout natura similitudinis exigit, nihil reprehendendum in iis conspicimus, imo ad Ecclesiae naturam et constitutionem explicandam valde hanc ideam conferre existimamus, eaque uti non abnuimus.[1]

That Perrone is thinking of Möhler is evident in that he gives as a reference section 36 of Symbolik. It is clear, too, that the Roman theologian understood Möhler's thinking, for, in that note, he rejects the opinions of those who would reproach such an ecclesiology with "nescio quem pantheismum." Pantheism, as the ultimate result of panentheism, is precisely what Möhler had come to fear in his early pneumatocentric ecclesiology in Einheit in der Kirche, which had come very close to making the Church into the incarnation of the Holy Spirit.

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[1] G. Perrone, *Praelectiones theologicae*, 9 vols. (Rome, 1835-1842), 8:28-31, quoted by Roger Aubert, "La géographie ecclésiologique au XIXe siècle," *L'ecclésiologie au XIXe siècle*, p. 35. Aubert regards this as the first indication of the penetration of German influence into the Roman college.

Thus Barth has failed to recognize the stages of development within Möhler's thought and the very decided changes which his theology underwent in the course of that development. But, beyond that, he has seen what Kuhn called "the dogmatic exaggeration" of identifying the incarnate Son with his Church. Others, too, made that mistake as Kuhn's comment and Perrone's defense of Möhler against charges of pantheism show. But the fact that a mistake is made by more than one renders it no less a mistake. The incarnation remains the foundation, the origin, and the model for the Church, but the Church is related to Christ as an image and as an instrument. One must view the Church within and against the light of the incarnation if one is to understand it. But Möhler does not identify it with the incarnation.

Like Barth, Strauss believed that Möhler understood Schleiermacher very well. But he believed Möhler had used Schleiermacher for his own purposes quite contrary to the

Protestant theologian's intentions. Strauss's criticism of Schleiermacher's Christology is well-known. While respecting the great theologian's work as the only serious and thorough attempt to construct a Christology beyond the language of "nature" and "person," he argued that Schleiermacher had moved illegitimately from Christian consciousness to the historical Jesus. Schleiermacher had defined Christianity as "a monotheistic faith, belonging to the teleological type of religion, and [which] is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth."[1] Thus, by what amounted to a variant of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, he had to trace what is distinctive in the consciousness of the Christian community to Christ. This yielded the Christ of Christian faith. "If, then, this Christ was a necessity for Schleiermacher as a pious man, and if he believed that as a theologian he could hold fast to him scientifically at the same time, then his dealing with the gospel story must be oriented to ascertaining just this picture of Christ."[2] So Strauss could claim that Schleiermacher "derived" his Redeemer from Christian consciousness.

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[1] *Glaubenslehre*, 2nd ed. trans., p. 52.

[2] D. F. Strauss, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History: A Critique of Schleiermacher's "Life of Jesus*," trans. Leander Keck (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 35.

And Möhler followed this pattern with his Church. Believing that what is intrinsic to the faith of the Christain could come only from his participation in the Church, Möhler simply located in the Church as he constructed it all of the hopes and strivings of believers. If Strauss is right, Möhler's refusal to dissociate the real from the ideal would explain his identification of this ideal Church which answers the needs and desires of Christians with the historical Catholic Church and so provide the counterpart to Schleiermacher's identification of his Christ of faith with the historical Jesus.

Quite apart from the justice or injustice of Strauss's criticism of Schleiermacher, our question must be whether his reading of Möhler is accurate. At the risk of making the Berlin professor a battlefield for Strauss and Möhler, it may prove helpful to note the latter's final judgment on Schleiermacher. It is found in the epilogue to Neue Untersuchungen when Möhler responds to Baur's claim that, whereas Catholicism allows objectivity to suppress subjectivity and classical Protestantism allowed subjectivity to triumph over objectivity, the Protestantism of their day allows both their proper weight thanks especially to the new direction given theology above all by Schleiermacher. This new direction consists in making Christian consciousness the center of systematic theology. This consciousness is possible only in the context of the community of faith, but, as Möhler emphasizes, Schleiermacher makes it stand superior to both scripture and symbolical books in that both must be interpreted only in accord with it. One might compare it to the contemporary Catholic view of tradition--or so Baur thinks. But Möhler sees little or no basis of comparison. "Schleiermacher places himself in the same relation to Christian objectivity as an oriental despot to the laws of his realm."[1] This is why he can in his Glaubenslehre twist citations from scripture and previous confessional statements "with horrifying arbitrariness" to make them corroborate his own spinning out of Christian consciousness. Luther, at least in his early career as a reformer, had his "voice of the Spirit" as an interpretive principle, Zwingli his "experience of the heart," the Anabaptists "interior revelation," the Quakers "inner light," and Schleiermacher Christian consciousness. The difference is that "he expressed himself with the utmost clarity in his striving for scientific form without fear of its results, and with the skill and judgement which are the product of his extraordinary talent and his vast multifaceted learning as well as of the spirit of the nineteenth century." Möhler's respect for Schleiermacher's accomplishment as a theologian is evident even when, in reply to Baur, he is forced to criticize him. But it astonishes him that

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[1] Möhler, Neue Untersuchungen[2], p. 417.

Baur could praise their great contemporary for balancing objectivity and subjectivity in his formulation of Christian doctrine. Indeed, had it not been for his communal sense and, Möhler shrewdly remarks, his unpopularity with so many Protestant churchmen, Schleiermacher could have been a sectarian within the German Reformed community. For "his idealism denied all objective foundations" and forced many to recognize that, despite the Protestant confessional statements of the past, scripture alone cannot be the standard for faith. Schleiermacher will have to end by holding one of two conclusions if he seriously wants to maintain Christian consciousness as the center of faith. Either he will have to admit that "Christian consciousness is the source of the doctrine of faith, and then all objectivity has disappeared in Protestantism," or "since the central point of a doctrine (or of a system of doctrine) can only be another doctrine, and in Christian systematics the doctrine of the person of Christ is the central point, the external historical Christ would once again be taken from us, and the doctrine of the Christ within, i.e., that each in his own person is the Son of God, would become that center around which systematics moves, and doctrinal theology itself would be the reflection of pious emotions."[1] The subject must swallow up the object, and the Christian community must fashion Christ in its own image.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 418f.

The context of these statements must be kept in mind if one is to evaluate fairly Möhler's attitude toward Schleiermacher. Here he is engaged in giving Baur what he hoped would be the coup de grâce in their debate and so must state his case in strong and stark terms. If anything is to be made of this passage in regard to Möhler's judgment of the man whose thought had been so influential in his own earlier work, attention should be paid to the expressions of admiration and respect which appear even in this very polemical atmosphere. In fact, Möhler seems too clever in his reduction of Schleiermacher's position to an "idealism" which denies "all objective foundations." Möhler may be partially absolved from the charge of deliberately distorting his great contemporary's thought. Strauss, after all, understood Schleiermacher as attempting to derive Christ from Christian consciousness, and he had the advantage of having read the latter's lectures on the life of Jesus, a benefit denied to Möhler in that they were not published until twenty-six years after his death, thirty years after the death of their author. But it was clear, nevertheless, from Schleiermacher's outline of the study of theology (which Möhler almost certainly knew) that critical historical study of the gospels was accorded an important place by the Berlin theologian. The hinge of the relationship between these critical studies and the doctrine of the Redeemer set forth in the Glaubenslehre is Schleiermacher's insistence that the person and the work of Christ cannot be separated from one another. The former is centered on his being the *Urbild*, the archetype, of humanity, the latter on his being its *Vorbild*, humanity's exemplar. His exemplarity is discovered in the power exercised upon us and communicated to us by his self-revelation in word and deed, in which we find and through which he claims, Schleiermacher argued in his lectures on the life of Jesus, that he is the archetype. But our concern is not with Möhler's view of Schleiermacher but with Strauss's view of Möhler. And it is interesting to note that at the conclusion of *Neue Untersuchungen* Möhler's criticism of Schleiermacher exactly coincides with Strauss's. Does Möhler himself then fall under that criticism?

Section 37 of *Symbolik*, the lengthy section on the Church added in 1833, might well be understood as an attempt to derive the Church from the consciousness of believers. In that section Möhler had attempted to illustrate the correspondence between the Church and the intellectual, volitional, and emotional needs of human beings who are in process of discovering the God-man relation. But that section had been added in the second edition as a complement to the previous section, in which the Church is derived from the incarnation understood precisely as an event which comes to humanity, not emerging from it. Indeed, as Möhler is at considerable pains to point out, a visible Church is necessary precisely because that God-man relation which is established in and by Christ "came from outside to men, and, of course, first to the apostles in whom the Kingdom of God was founded by the Word of God speaking to them in a human way from outside themselves, so that it penetrated into them from without."[1] What has happened in Christ is not something which can emerge from within humanity. It breaks in upon man from without. It is a revelation within history. Just as the fact "that Carthage was captured by Scipio Aemilianus is known to us only through ancient historians, and our own internal processes of thought give us not the slightest hint of it,"[2] so too one cannot deduce the fact of the incarnation from consciousness. The existence of the Church may be derived from that event. But then it too confronts the consciousness of believers. It is not deduced from that Christian consciousness.

Strauss criticized Schleiermacher for avoiding the acceptance of the New Testament miracles as purely supernatural while not eliminating the basic miracle of the appearance of a sinless Jesus with fully developed God-consciousness in history.[3] Although God-consciousness is intrinsic to human beings as such, the perfection of Jesus in this regard in quality and degree is such that it can be explained only by a direct activity of God. But in the panentheist universe such an activity has no place. In a particularly striking passage for our purposes, Strauss draws out the consequences of this in Schleiermacher's thought.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:483.

[2] Ibid., 1:459.

[3] Strauss, The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History, pp. 83-99.

> The divine in Christ is to relate to his individual human life the way the Holy Spirit as the divine element is related to the Christian communal life in the church. Still, there is a difference--in Christianity, as in every single Christian, that which emerges as actual decision and deed is always imperfect, infected with sin; in Christ, to the contrary, "that which appears as human was indeed also single, definite as well as limited, but in its human form was to be explained purely on the basis of the divine in him," and was perfect and sinless. This means that the relation of the divine and the human in Christ is to be thought of like the same relation in the church, yet totally differently; in common life we would think ourselves victims of a hoax if someone talked us into something in this way.[1]

This position on the relationship of Christ and the Church which Strauss credits to Schleiermacher seems remarkably similar to the position which we have seen in Möhler. In both we find the distinction between the relation of the divine and human in Christ and that same relation in the Church to consist in the fact that in Christ the human was perfectly coordinated and obedient to the divine whereas in the Church that ordering of the human to the divine is not yet perfected. Strauss regards this as incomprehensible in Schleiermacher on the grounds that the presence of the divine in Jesus is not of a different order from that presence in any other human being. It could not be, for in a panentheist system, the divine is so joined with the natural which exists within it that, although differences of degree and intensity of divine presence may be conceivable, differences of kind are not. But Schleiermacher has left room for "a miraculous fact."[1] He had carefully prepared in the introduction to the Glaubenslehre for the Christological doctrine to be expounded later by noting that "the appearance of the Redeemer in history is, as divine revelation, neither an absolutely supernatural thing nor an absolutely super-rational thing."[2] The possibility of the fullness of God-consciousness appearing within a human being, even to the extent that it could be regarded as "a veritable existence of God in him,"[3] can not be claimed as supernatural in the sense of an abrogation of natural laws in a particular instance. Were it so claimed, the Redeemer would not be a human being at all. The possibility of the appearance of one in whom there would be "a veritable existence of God" must be regarded as natural. But the one in whom God-consciousness would be perfect must, as a human being, have been conditioned by the whole of history, with all its sinfulness. Thus the appearance itself of the Redeemer, the fact of that appearance, not its possibility, must be regarded as miraculous. Schleiermacher expresses this as the fact that Jesus "must have entered into the corporate life of sinfulness, but he cannot have come out of it."[1] In his lectures on the life of Jesus, Schleiermacher suggests that it was precisely the astonishing fact of his own sinlessness, the complete harmony of his sensuous life with his God-consciousness, which led Jesus to "the consciousness of a specific difference between himself and all other men."[2] Thus Schleiermacher is not subject to Strauss's strictures on this point while at the same time affirming the uniqueness of Jesus and his "specific difference" from all others. Accordingly, he can also speak of the divine and human in Christ as united in a way both like and unlike the union of the Holy Spirit and the Church.

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[1] Ibid., p. 26.

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[1] Glaubenslehre, 2nd ed. trans., p. 381.

[2] Ibid., p. 62.

[3] Ibid., p. 385.

Although Strauss might well have regarded Möhler's position as cruder and more "supernaturalist" than Schleiermacher's, he could not have questioned its consistency. For the primary difference between the way in which Möhler uses the relationship of the divine and the human in Christ to explain the relationship of the divine and the human in the Church and the way in which Schleiermacher does so rests upon their differing attempts at formulating the God-man relationship. Strauss wrote of Schleiermacher's attempt that the latter had recognized that

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[1] Ibid., p. 381.

[2] F. Schleiermacher, The Life of Jesus, ed. Jack C. Verheyden, trans. S. MacLean Gilmour (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 100.

> a divine nature will always degrade the human, with which it is to constitute a single person, to a mere appearance; on the other hand, human nature is quite capable of containing the existence of the divine within it, if only this divine is not conceived as a nature with its own knowledge, will, and so forth, alongside the human.[1]

Having recognized this important distinction, Schleiermacher accepted the necessary condition, quite rightly according to Strauss. When Schleiermacher equates the divine in Christ with the Holy Spirit in the Church, he maintains that the humanity of the Church is not endangered.

> But why can one assume a divine element only here in the church, without dissolving the continuity of the human? For this reason: "Because in this the divine is thought of not in the form of an actual distinct consciousness but only as what lies at the base of the common consciousness, only as the energizing power at the inmost center," in contrast with which we "understand everything which externalizes itself as purely human." If we think of the divine in Christ according to this analogy, then we no longer think of it in personal terms, no longer as a divine being united with the human, but only as an effective impulse working on it, that is, as a heightening of its natural powers, especially of its God-consciousness, which we assume in Christ to be something absolute, powerful, and exclusively determinative of all aspects of life.[2]

To demonstrate that Strauss is not completely just to Schleiermacher would take us far afield. This passage does, however, serve to point to that which differentiates

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[1] Strauss, The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History, p. 24.

[2] Ibid. The quotation from Schleiermacher is a very loose citation of The Life of Jesus, p. 97.

Schleiermacher and Möhler so clearly on this issue. For Schleiermacher the distinction between the divine in Christ and the divine in the Church is an economic distinction, that is, a distinction in the way in which God is related to humanity. On that economic level, the distinction is real and the uniqueness of Christ is preserved. But that distinction reflects no distinction immanent to the divine pole of the God-man relation. The relativity of the immanent Trinity, which Möhler found in 1827 was necessary to preserve the integrity of the human in the God-man polarity, allowed him to affirm not only real distinctions between the ways in which divinity and humanity were united in Christ and in the Church, but also real distinctions in both the divine and the human poles of that unity. The union of the Son with human nature in Christ is hypostatic, a unique relationship. Far more important for our purposes than exploring what this had meant in the traditional Chalcedonian formula is noticing the direction in which Möhler seems to point. If we are correct in identifying the nature-supernature relation or the God-man polarity as central to Möhler's thought and not least his ecclesiology, and if the primary concern in the development of that thought from 1827 on was the maintenance of the integrity of the human, a concern which demanded his defense of the doctrine of the immanent Trinity, then the Tübingen theologian was both pointing toward and laying the groundwork for the suggestions advanced regarding the trinitarian doctrine in our own day by Karl Rahner who has noted that "incarnation" is to be understood as a term designating that form of self-communication characteristic of the second "person" of the Trinity.[1]

The criticisms of Strauss and Barth serve to draw attention to a major weakness in Möhler's ecclesiology. Möhler employed the incarnation as the framework in which to understand the Church in order to affirm the interaction of the divine and the human each in its integrity. He clearly did not, however, wish to claim the Church as an instance of hypostatic union. Indeed, he became acutely sensitive to the danger implicit in Einheit in der Kirche of interpreting the Church as a hypostatic union of the Spirit and the community. But how the Church can be a fit instrument for the continuance of Christ's work, i.e., a society which reflects the proper God-man relation, without itself being the relationship established in Christ, i.e., hypostatic union, remains unresolved in Möhler's work. The resolution would have required a carefully worked-through Christology, and such a Christological reflection is missing in Möhler's thought.

The importance of Strauss's brief comment on Möhler is that, in taking seriously the Tübingen theologian's placement of the doctrine of the Church within the framework of Christological thought, he forces us to confront the major gap in Möhler's work, the absence of a Christology. That absence also sheds further light on Barth's fundamental criticism that Möhler divinized the Church.

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[1] Karl Rahner, The Trinity (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 24-33.

The lack of a sustained Christological reflection in Möhler's writing is not surprising. First, it must be remembered that Möhler was not a systematic theologian and so was not called upon by his academic work to produce a synthesis in which so important an element as Christology could not be bypassed. Second, but related closely to this first consideration, we must recognize that Möhler's published output consists of three books: Einheit in der Kirche, Athanasius der Grosse, and Symbolik in its various editions. There are, of course, numerous reviews and articles, some of them quite lengthy, such as the study of Anselm of Canterbury. Many of these, however, were called forth by specific events about which the author wished to comment, e.g., his intervention in the Bautain affair or his remarks on the clash between the Catholic church and the Prussian government over marriage legislation.[1] Neue Untersuchungen is a defense and explanation of Symbolik and should not be regarded as a distinct work. Thus Möhler's three principal literary products are a patristically based study of ecclesiology, an investigation of the Arian controversy and a book on comparative dogmatics. It is not a matter of astonishment then that we should find little direct reference to Christological questions. Third, Möhler died at the age of forty-two but in fact produced no major work after 1835, save for the uncompleted fifth edition of Symbolik, because of his failing health. His productive life as a writer was in effect finished by his fortieth birthday. The brevity of his career makes it remarkable not that he should have failed to concern himself with a major issue in theology, but that he succeeded in contributing importantly to any. And, fourth, the date of the last significant publications of Möhler's work in his lifetime is noteworthy. For 1835 also saw the appearance of Strauss's The Life of Jesus Critically Examined.

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[1] "Über die neueste Bekämpfung der catholischen Kirche," Münchener Politische Zeitung, January 29-30 and February 15-17, 1838, pp. 149-151, 154-156, 241-242, 254-256; republished in Möhler, Gesammelte Schriften, 2:226-243.

"What if . . . ?" is a fascinating but usually unproductive game, at least when clues are few. It seems unlikely that Möhler could have avoided being drawn into the debate surrounding Strauss's book had his health been better and his life longer. Strauss was a student of Baur and a familiar figure in Tübingen. If the controversy with Baur had continued, it seems reasonable to imagine that Möhler's attention would have been drawn to Strauss as an example of those elements in contemporary Protestantism which he most objected to in Baur. But more important, Strauss's work raised the question which the historical theologian Möhler could not possibly have avoided, the relationship of the Christian faith and history. Would Möhler have been led by participation in the Life of Jesus debate to devote greater attention to Christological questions?

The very mootness of the question points to an interesting point. The "quest for the historical Jesus," which was given such impetus by the appearance of Strauss's study, occurred after Möhler's career. This suggests an important element when considering Möhler's Christology--or the lack thereof. What is most obviously missing from the Catholic Tübingen scholar's work is any reference to the life of Jesus. The incarnation plays a decisive role in the working out of the God-man relation in Möhler's thought, as has been observed throughout this study. But consistently Möhler appeals to the fact of Jesus, not his career. Möhler's Christological focus is the incarnation, not the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The story, the fate and the glorification of Jesus are, at most, the verification and manifestation of the incarnation. The significance of Jesus in such a view is who he is, not what he does. If the divine-human person is effected in the incarnation, the death of Jesus becomes merely the working-out of the consequences of the existence of the God-man, and the resurrection is reduced to a warrant for belief in the incarnation. The vocation, career, message, death and glorification of the historical Jesus become unimportant when the establishment of the hypostatic union in the Christ of the Chalcedonian formula is seen as the center of Christian faith. Möhler did not reject the former for the latter. He simply seems to have devoted attention to the former.

This oversight on Möhler's part is especially ironic in an historian. For exclusive concentration on the Christ of dogma leads to an interpretation of the incarnation as the divine assumption of human nature but fails to appreciate the divine assumption of human history. Perhaps the central role of the notion of living tradition which he had learned from Drey inclined Möhler to assume too easily that the classical dogmatic tradition exhaustively translated the scriptural witness to the salvation worked in Jesus. If so, the "quest for the historical Jesus" might well have introduced him to a more broadly biblical Christology.

Had that happened, what difference would it make to his Christocentric ecclesiology? The descending Christology which finds its most balanced expression in the Chalcedonian formula has undeniably had a monophysite bent in the history of Christian thought. If the incarnation establishes in its perfection the God-man relation in the union of the divine and human natures in Jesus, then his actions, his choices, his final self-gift to the Father have no constitutive meaning. He has a human nature without a human history, and the now familiar problems arise of the state of his human consciousness, knowledge and will. The bias of such a Christology is necessarily toward the divine pole in the God-man relation. The accuracy of Strauss's judgment is attested by the history of the mainstream of Christological thought and Christian piety, that "a divine nature will always degrade the human, with which it is to constitute a single person, to a mere appearance."[1] If this is the context of one's Christology, if indeed this is the inherent bias of the Chalcedonian formula, then making that formula the foundation of ecclesiology will tend, however much one tries to preserve the integrity of both the divine and human elements in the Church, to eclipse the latter. Möhler saw that rooting ecclesiology in Christology would provide the doctrine of the Church with the proper formulation of the God-man polarity. But clearly a biased Christology will produce a biased ecclesiology. Since Möhler began with the formula of Chalcedon, which has in fact been biased toward a monophysite position in its usual interpretation since the fifth century and which must, by its employment of the static concept of "nature," prove weighted toward the divine, he inevitably, but against his intention, ended up with an ecclesiology biased toward monophysitism.

This is the element of truth at the heart of Barth's criticism of Möhler. Although Barth failed to appreciate the marked difference between Möhler's understanding of the

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[1] Strauss, The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History, p. 24.

Church in Einheit in der Kirche and in Symbolik, his charge that Möhler identified "the Church and its faith and its Word with the revelation which is its basis" comes close to the truth. We have noted that even Möhler's talented student, Kuhn, worried about his master's "dogmatic exaggeration." Although Möhler did clearly decline to identify the Church with Christ, nevertheless the question must arise why such astute readers as Barth and Kuhn could interpret his final position in that fashion.

Möhler sought to escape the implication of a divinized Church inherent in his early panentheism. To do so, he eventually took the Chalcedonian Christological formula as the basis for ecclesiology. Ironically, however, the monophysite bias of that Christology easily leads to precisely what he had set out to avoid, a divinized Church. The basis for this is no longer a panentheist identification of God's Spirit with the Gemeingeist, but the communicatio idiomatum, the logical translation of hypostatic union, the claim that attributes of either nature can be affirmed of the one person. This communicatio extends to the Church in Möhler's Christocentric ecclesiology, leading to affirmations which seem to sit ill together, e.g., the Church is sinful, the Church's teaching office is infallible. For is it possible to maintain the full humanity of the Church, including the teaching authority of the Church, whether that is located in the papal or episcopal offices or both, while claiming infallibility for that teaching authority? Does this not seem to exempt the office, if not the officeholders, from history which relativizes all statements? Do the Church's magisterial pronouncements not fall subject to the conditions governing all human statements? If not, has the Church's teaching office not assumed a more than merely human stature which can be seen as a symptom of an ecclesiological monophysitism?

This is not the place to discuss the shifting understanding of magisterial infallibility throughout the nineteenth century and our own.[1] In light of the suggestion that Möhler's Christology is too static, too much an ontological and too little an historical understanding of Jesus, we should note that the communicatio idiomatum may function in the same way but mean something quite different in various Christological perspectives. In a descending Christology, such as that which Möhler presumed in the Chalcedonian formula, the communicatio is a given, a logical consequence of the hypostatic union. In an ascending Christology which takes the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as its focus rather than the incarnation, the communicatio is an achievement, a reality finally proclaimed in triumph. An ecclesiology built upon the first Christological stance seems inevitably to tend toward the identification of the divine and the human elements in the Church from the Church's inception. The very thought-form, a union of natures, dictates an essentially static view in which, on the level of Christology, the salvation worked in Christ is effected without, indeed prior to, any freely determined act on Jesus' part and, on the level of ecclesiology, the Church may expand but not, in any decisive or significant way, develop. Thus the humanity of the Church's members, which can entail sin, error, cowardice, etc., may be affirmed, without really affirming the humanity of the Church. For if the Church _qua_ Church is truly a human community and not merely a community of human beings, then the Church _qua_ Church must be subject to the vicissitudes of history. But it is precisely history which is absent from the static conceptual world of "natures." An ascending Christological stance, however, must allow the historically conditioned personality of Jesus, developing over time, its full role in the task of being. This is not to accord dominance to time over being, but to assert the mutuality of their relation. This introduces the category of history into the _communicatio idiomatum_ in such a way that, without prejudicing the complementary insight which gives rise to various forms of descending Christology, full weight can be given to the events by which Jesus became established as the Son of God in power. Accordingly, an ecclesiology shaped within such a Christology must allow for the historically conditioned process by which the Church becomes more manifestly the story of the communion of the Spirit within human society. The teaching office will thus be understood as speaking infallibly the Church's understanding of its mission and its relation to the Lord at that moment of history, but never as speaking all that will yet be true as it makes those decisions which shape its future, decisions which are historically conditioned and so subject to the judgment of God. The Church grows not only in self-knowledge but in its stature as the Church, as Jesus grew not only in self-understanding but in his stature as the Christ.

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[1] This has recently been done with great care and skill by Pottmeyer, Unfehlbarkeit und Souveränität.

This insistence on the history of the Church as a fully human history which not only coincides with but realizes the dealing of God with history at large is very much more in accord with Möhler's language about the Church as a "living image" of Christ which functions as the instrument of the Lord but is not identified with him.[1] The communicatio idiomatum cannot be employed in ecclesiology as it is now in Christology, because Jesus' history is complete: he is established in power as the Christ; but the Church's history is not: it is still a pilgrim on the way to being what it will be when it comes to full stature, the body of Christ.

Möhler's presumption of a descending Christology which was framed in terms of a union of natures rather the ultimately significant history and his failure to critique that presumption, a critique which might well have been demanded of him had he lived a few more years, shaped his Christocentric ecclesiology in such a way that, despite his constant endeavor to guarantee the integrity of the human element in the Church, the Church emerges as an institution which at key points seemsto be preserved from the vicissitudes of history and so appears more (or less) than human. This was not some covert escape into supernaturalism on Möhler's part, still less a move toward a politic ecclesiastical conservatism. It was simply the state of the question as he left it at his death.

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[1] Möhler, Symbolik, 1:353.

Möhler's insistence that God must always remain objective for man, his absolute refusal to deduce God from man or man from God, is another statement of his resolution to hold the divine and the human in relation without allowing them to collapse into identity. His effort to do so is part of the question of nature and supernature which lies at the heart of Christian thought and which has assumed new, sometimes polemically sharpened, importance since the Reformation. He placed himself in that line of discussion very consciously in Symbolik. His ecclesiological development reflected the changes and clarifications of his thought on the God-man relation while assuming the characteristic overtones of the thought of his time: idealist philosophy, romanticism, the Catholic awakening.

What has been the significance of that ecclesiological development? Möhler restored the Church to the dignity of a mystery of faith from having been merely the bearer of mysteries. Catholic theology from the counter-reformation on had treated the Church exclusively as a visible society comparable, as Bellarmine wrote, to "the Roman people or the kingdom of France or the republic of Venice." This visible, hierarchically organized Church, endowed with all it required to maintain its existence and fulfill its purposes, a societas perfecta, was not an object of faith but a support for faith. One need not believe in the Church any more than one need believe in the Venetian republic. It was a datum, a fact of experience. It required no faith to be a member of the Church, merely the acceptance of an experiential reality.[1] The Church proclaimed truths as dogmas demanding faith from its members and elicited that faith by the strength of its own testimony. As one might have to put trust in the honesty of a witness's account but not in the obvious fact of the witness's existence, so the believer put his faith in the Church's preaching but simply acknowledged the reality of the Church. Möhler, however, placed the Church within the truths which it proclaimed. It was no longer the bearer of revelation but the embodiment of revelation, no longer the possessor of God's self-communication but the extension of that communication. The existence of the Church as Church was not a fact of experience, but a doctrine of faith intimately connected with, illuminating, and illuminated by other doctrines of faith.

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[1] R. Bellarmine, Controversiae generales, Opera omnia, 12 vols. (Paris, 1870-1874), 4, III, 2: "Ut aliquis aliquo modo dici possit pars verae Ecclesiae . . . non putamus requiri ullam internam virtutem sed tantum externam professionem fidei et sacramentorum communionem quae sensu ipso percipitur."

This re-evaluation of the Church was present both in the pneumatocentric framework of 1825 and the Christocentric one of his last years. The insistence that in some way the Church is itself the self-communicated presence of God remained constant. The "some way" was re-thought, but the conviction which it supported stood fast. Since the Church was no longer viewed as a witness who proclaimed certain truths and supplied evidence supporting them, but was itself the evidence which one believed or denied, any reformulation of those truths entailed a re-understanding of the Church and vice versa. Möhler effectively gave the Church its rightful place in systematic theology by putting it into a context determined by the two basic Christian dogmas of Trinity and incarnation. The way in which these dogmas are treated decides the shape of ecclesiology and, conversely, the way in which one understands the Church must give form to one's dogmatic statements. This has been his most influential contribution to subsequent Roman Catholic theology. His student, Franz Anton Staudenmaier in dealing with the question of Church-state relations approached his task in a way reminiscent of his teacher. Although, like Möhler, Staudenmaier could sometimes seem to make full humanity dependent upon Christian revelation in a way which undermined the integrity of humanity and compromised divine freedom,[1] his efforts were directed toward the recognition of the Church and the state as independent but related realities. The Church by its proclamation of the Gospel produces truly free human beings, people who act on the basis of justice and love. The state in turn must guarantee the freedom of all religious communities which foster justice and peace within the state and between states. Both Church and state harmonize and find their proper relation in the production of free persons. Staudenmaier grounds this in the doctrine of the Trinity where the unity of Father and Son is found in the mutual spiration of the Spirit.[2] It is noteworthy that, although ecclesiology was not his major area of concern, Staudenmaier treated it as an instance of the nature-supernature problem and placed it in the context set by his trinitarian thought. This placement of ecclesiology in the system of theology is Möhler's legacy.

The influence of Möhler's ecclesiology from below, the current of thought expressed in *Einheit in der Kirche* and section 37 of *Symbolik*, found in the later part of the nineteenth century little echo among Roman Catholic theologians. Friedrich Pilgram acknowledged his debt to Möhler precisely on the issue of using the metaphor of an organism for the Church in order to maintain the balance of inward development and outward expression. But Pilgram, a convert from Lutheranism, was a layman who never held a teaching position in theology and whose major work in ecclesiology had the misfortune to be published in 1860 as the neo-scholastic theological revival began to pick up steam.[1] The most distinguished name among those who found inspiration from Möhler's early work is that of Matthias Joseph Scheeben. The question of influences working on Scheeben is a delicate one, for his remarkably original and synthetic mind combined and transformed so many currents that it is impossible to isolate a particular strand in his writings and trace it to a particular source. He was, however, familiar with all of

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[1] For example, "Only through Christianity is the true man formed; genuine humanity is its work alone," F. A. Staudenmaier, Die kirchliche Aufgabe der Gegenwart (Freiburg in Breisgau, 1849), p. 135.

[2] The best statement of F. A. Staudenmaier's ecclesiology is his Das Wesen der katholischen Kirche. Mit Rücksicht auf ihre Gegner dargestellt, 2nd ed. (Freiburg in Breisgau, 1845).

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[1] F. Pilgram, *Physiologie der Kirche. Forschungen über die geistigen Gesetze in denen die Kirche nach ihrer natürlichen Seite besteht* (Mainz, 1860). A new edition appeared (Mainz: R. Oldenbourg, 1931) with an extended introduction by W. Becker which began a revival of interest in Pilgram's thought generally and in his ecclesiology particularly; see Stanislas Jaki, *Les Tendances nouvelles de l'Ecclesiologie* (Rome: Herder, 1957); Bernhard Casper, *Die Einheit aller Wirklichkeit. Friedrich Pilgram und seine theologische Philosophie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1961); and H. J. von Mallinckrodt, *Sozialität und Verstehen. Die hermeneutische Funktion der Kirche nach Friedrich Pilgram* (Zurich: Benziger, 1971).

Möhler's published work and had in fact his attention drawn to Symbolik by his teachers, Passaglia and Franzelin. His attempt to situate all theological topics within a "total organism of mysteries," the incorporation of the Church into the realm of these Christian mysteries as itself a mystery and not merely the guardian of the mysteries, is clearly in the line of reflection in which Möhler's work stands as an early milepost. Scheeben's constant preoccupation, from his very earliest work on nature and grace,[1] is to affirm the Trinity as the ground and horizon of creation without dissolving God and the world into one another. This is once again the concern which we have seen dominant in Möhler's writings from Athanasius on. Scheeben emphasized the reverse of Möhler's modal supernaturality. He sought to emphasize the fact of two orders, that of grace and that of nature. Yet, by a careful reading of Scheeben's Dogmatik,[2] one soon recognizes that, having once delineated the two orders, in the attempt to relate them to one another, Scheeben came closer and closer to the position which we have observed underlying Möhler's best writings. The ecclesiological treatise which was to complete the Dogmatik was unfortunately never written, yet enough can be garnered from that work and his *Die Mysterien des Christentums*[1] to indicate that elements of both *Symbolik* and *Einheit in der Kirche* were at work in Scheeben's theology of the Church. Thus the Church is seen as an instance, together with Christ and the Eucharist, of the "sacramental mystery," the will of God to unite spirit and matter, invisible and visible, grace and nature.[2] While this may appear a firmly Christocentric ecclesiology in the line of *Symbolik*, we find elsewhere a pneumatologically expressed doctrine which might have seemed extreme even to the author of *Einheit in der Kirche*. Thus, we find Scheeben maintaining that the Church is "a kind of incarnation of the Holy Spirit."[3] This leads to an absolutizing of the Church which both precludes any understanding of a sinful Church and divorces the Church as theologically studied from the Church as historically studied. Whether Scheeben could have finally combined an ecclesiology like that of *Einheit* with one like that of *Symbolik* is a moot question, but both strands are certainly present in his work.

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[1] M. J. Scheeben, Natur und Gnade. Versuch einer systematischen, wissenschaftlichen Darstellung der natürlichen und übernatürlichen Lebensordnung in Menschen (Mainz, 1861).

[2] M. J. Scheeben, Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik, 3 vols. (Freiburg in Breisgau, 1873-1887).

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[1] Subtitled *Wesen, Bedeutung und Zusammenhang derselben nach der in ihrem übernatürlichen Charakter gegebenen Perspektive dargestellt* (Freiburg, 1865); in English translation, *The Mysteries of Christianity*, trans. Cyril Vollert (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1946).

[2] Scheeben, *The Mysteries of Christianity*, pp. 561-566.

[3] Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, vol. III, sec. 276, n. 1612.

The Christocentric ecclesiology of Symbolik found more acceptance in Roman Catholic circles in the nineteenth century than did Möhler's early pneumatocentrism. There was, however, a tendency to read Symbolik's ecclesiology in a context other than that in which it had been written. Möhler's ecclesiological development had been a function of his concern with the God-world relation. While following the Tübingen theologian in his restoration of the doctrine of the Church to its place in relationship to the doctrines of God, Christ, redemption, etc., many later theologians centered on his Christocentric ecclesiology as a way of placing the Church and its structures beyond the reach of history. Thus the Roman school, whose major figures were Giovanni Perrone, Carlo Passaglia, Clemens Schrader, and Johann Baptist Franzelin, generally interpreted Symbolik on the basis of the downward ecclesiology of section 36 quite apart from the counterbalancing upward ecclesiology of section 37. Thus, almost inevitably, the Church began more and more to be understood as a kind of incarnation, which in practice led to a divinization of the community. The most astute member of the Roman school, Perrone, as we have seen, recognized the subtlety of Möhler's attempt to hold together the divine and the human in the Church. But given the siege-mentality of Pius IX's Rome, it is not surprising to find Perrone using the Christocentric ecclesiology to guarantee the authority of the hierarchy and the role of the Church as the rule of faith.

Möhler's derivation of a visible, hierarchically structured Church from the doctrine of the incarnation became in Perrone's hands an affirmation of the centrality of the ecclesia docens. Thus we find a statement which would have been perfectly understood by Stapleton or Ballarmine, e.g.,

> Ecclesiae nomine hic intelligimus coetum omnium fidelium . . . seu ecclesiam discentem; sed potius episcopatum universum seu, ut ita dicam, in tota sua plenitudine, nempe corpus pastorum una cum Romano Pontifica, seu ecclesiam docentem,[1]

united with the Christocentric ecclesiology, e.g.,

> Ecclesiae auctoritas spectari non debet ut auctoritas humana, sed velut organum divinitatis ac perpetua seu jugis manifestatio Christi ipsius, qui eam sibi suffecit ut testem, judicem ac magistram.[2]

So Möhler's Symbolik is brought to support the ecclesiology which he had taught in his canon law lectures at the beginning of his career and had so long ago rejected. Thus, although Perrone defended Möhler and urged his students and colleagues in Rome to study the Tübingen theologian, and though he clearly learned much from him, especially regarding the integration of ecclesiology into his systematic theology, neither he nor the other members of the Roman school saw the true direction of the earlier writer's work. And oddly, Scheeben, a student of the Roman school who, on the surface of his work, seems quite opposed to Möhler's attempts to relate the divine and the human, was perhaps of all Roman Catholic theologians in the latter half of the nineteenth century the one closest to Möhler's spirit.

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[1] Perrone, Praelectiones theologicae, 1:15, quoted by Congar, L'Église de saint Augustin à l'epoque moderne, p. 431, n. 7.

[2] Perrone, Praelectiones theologicae, 2:370, quoted by Congar, L'Église de Saint Augustin à l'epoque moderne, p. 431, n. 6.

The triumph of the neo-scholasticism of Kleutgen and Liberatore with its suspicion of German theology in the first decades of the last century, the narrowing of ecclesiological thought to the debate about papal primacy and infallibility at the time of the first Vatican council and the defense of that body's decision afterward, and the later anti-Modernist reaction, all served to confine attention to Symbolik, which had achieved the status of a "classic" in German Catholic circles and so could not be completely forgotten. Möhler's masterpiece was, however, read outside the context of his developing thought. Frequently it was used as an example of theological opinion in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century which seemed to be in harmony with the ecclesiology of the first Vatican Council. Möhler's influence was chiefly felt as a forerunner of the "mystical body of Christ" metaphor for the Church which achieved so much currency in the period between the world wars and culminated in Pius XII's Mystici Corporis in 1943. Möhler's earlier work, his indebtedness to Drey, his setting within the intellectual world of his time, his interaction with his Protestant contemporaries, all this was largely forgotten. Starting in the 1930's and in great part due to the historical work of Geiselmann, a clearer picture began to emerge of the one-time teacher of Church history at Tübingen. Within a very different theological context, Roman Catholic scholars discovered remarkably parallel concerns in their work and that of Möhler.

By placing the doctrine of the Church within the larger frame of the God-man relation, Möhler made his ecclesiology an instance of his understanding of grace. As his thinking about the Church developed, so too did his formulation of the relationship of nature and grace. The position attained in the fifth edition of Symbolik is remarkably close to that advocated by the so-called nouvelle théologie a century after the Tübingen theologian's death. For the central element of that later movement in Catholic thought was the rejection of the notion of natura pura. Henri de Lubac was only the most forceful of many Catholic theologians who rejected the idea of a "state of pure nature" as a theological construct which had outlived its usefulness.[1] While maintaining the existence throughout the centuries of a tradition in Roman Catholic theology which never required and so never accepted the notion of "pure nature," de Lubac admitted that post-Tridentine theologians, especially after the Baianist and Jansenist debates, permitted that "Augustinian" tradition to be eclipsed. It is unfortunate that de Lubac did not examine the development of Möhler's thinking more closely, for he would have found a useful ally in the nineteenth-century theologian, one whose work had not suffered anything worse than neglect as a result of the neo-Thomist triumph and the anti-Modernist reaction, an ally whose support could have proved most helpful in 1950 when Pius XII's Humani generis condemned the "new theology." De Lubac refers only once to Möhler in his history of this "Augustinian" line of thought. "Pure nature" is nature conceived in such a way that its purpose does not consist in the reception of God's self-communication. So long as this conception is recognized as a purely hypothetical theological construct, it may be useful in order to underline the gratuity of grace and its prevenient quality. But if it is treated as a real state in which creation has at any time existed, it renders God's self-gift so extrinsic to man that one can sympathize with Baur's description of Catholicism as making the whole of Christianity into one great *opus supererogationis*. This could indeed seem true, de Lubac agrees citing Baur's comment, of "a certain school of theology." Unfortunately "Moehler had no time even to seek to remedy it."[1] In fact Möhler had little time for anything else once the first edition of Symbolik had appeared. It is true that Möhler's gradual recasting of the God-man relation in the subsequent editions was not enough to redirect the mainstream of Catholic thought on grace in his day, but grave injustice is done to the author of Symbolik and Neue Untersuchungen if one fails to recognize the importance of his maturing views on nature and grace. We have seen that by the fifth edition of Symbolik, Möhler had come to what I have termed a modal understanding of nature and supernature. The natural and the supernatural are two modes of existence of the one truly existing reality, not two distinct levels of reality. "Pure nature" had been created by theologians to safeguard the gratuity of grace, to explain that it was not owed to nature by a God who had fashioned nature for a goal unattainable by it. In doing so, this concept had also served to preserve the integrity of nature, to prevent its being swallowed up in supernature--although this latter had not been the goal of the theological school which produced the concept. Möhler, however, no longer needed it. Though, at first reading, it may seem as if the final edition of Symbolik strongly affirms the notion of a state of pure nature, even temporally, when Möhler opts for a theory of man's creation which distinguishes between

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[1] See Henri de Lubac, The Mystery of the Supernatural (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), as well as its companion volume, idem, Augustinianism and Modern Theology (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), both of which first appeared in French in 1965.

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[1] De Lubac, Augustinianism and Modern Theology, p. 293. It is significant that de Lubac footnotes his reference to the Möhler-Baur controversy to Vermeil, p. 184, when

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Baur's comment on supererogation is quoted. Thus it would not appear that de Lubac himself has investigated the question with great care.

justice and holiness, envisioning man as created with the first, i.e., a fully coordinated interplay of all his natural abilities, but receiving the second, i.e., grace, only after a period of time, nevertheless his use of iustitia originalis is quite different from the natura pura which so many of his contemporaries held and which de Lubac has so strongly attacked. For precisely what Möhler denies is that iustitia originalis is purely natural. It too is gift, is grace, for there is no intrinsic necessity in its being. God's creation of "nature" is as free as his bestowal of "grace." Thus the natural has an end attainable in itself which is still a relationship with God, namely the knowledge of and love for the creator to which the creature can come through creation, while engraced nature receives a new level of this same relationship. And it is precisely the freedom of God, source of creation and of grace, which the construct of natura pura sought to assure, which grounds both. Möhler may not have had the opportunity to elaborate this insight, but it was central to his own theological development.

Thus Möhler anticipated a major movement of Roman Catholic thought in our century. He did so, however, in seeking to preserve the integrity of both the divine and human poles of the grace relationship. When applying that modal view of nature and grace to the Church, he was able to achieve that balance of the divine and human in the community which he had sought throughout his brief career. The fact that he was prevented by death from revising the ecclesiological portion of his masterwork in full accord with the balanced nature-grace polarity which he presented in his fifth revision of Symbolik in no way lessens his achievement.

We may seek that application to ecclesiology by observing the extremes which Möhler was able to avoid in Symbolik. The extremes of this Christocentric ecclesiology may be described in terms drawn from classical Christology: Möhler sought an ecclesiology which was neither monophysite nor Nestorian.

It is clear that the attempt to maintain the God-man relationship without allowing it to collapse into an identity in which the human would simply be lost found a parallel in the search for an ecclesiology which would not let the divine element in the Church swallow up the human community. This had apparently been Möhler's fear regarding the pneumatocentric theology of the Church presented in Einheit in der Kirche. He had to seek a position which held the divine and the human in an inseparable but unconfused relation, a position like that of the Chalcedonian formula in Christology. Thus it became a primary concern that the reality of a human community be safeguarded. No measurement, no method of study, no sociological principle applicable to a human community could be dismissed as inapplicable to the

Church. The historian, the political scientist, the sociologist, the economist, can all find in the Church a suitable subject of study. The lengthy section added in the second edition of Symbolik is built upon the Church's correspondence to human hopes and needs, its capacity for the furtherance of true integral humanity. The Munich Church history notes indicate Möhler's growing interest in the last months of his life in the Church's role as a sign to those outside its community of the true value and richness of their existence. Both of these tasks, the effective furtherance of the humanity of its members and the demonstration and sacramentalization of that humanity to nonmembers, demand the reality of a human community. Not merely a visible community--an embodiment of a divine unifying principle, which was the direction of Möhler's 1825 work, however much he tried to avoid following that path--but a truly human community, capable of being studied by the methods and measurements employed in the social sciences. And so the Church history notes of 1837-1838 insist on the truth of both that conception of history which traces everything to an absolute cause and that which explains everything by the system of finite causality, even when dealing with the history of the Church. Three quarters of a century later Friedrich von Hügel wrote appreciatively of his debt to Ernst Troeltsch for the latter's having taught him to appreciate the distinction and relatedness of nature and supernature in the medieval theological tradition, an appreciation von Hügel believed had long been absent in Catholicism.[1] The good baron might well have discovered that appreciation in Möhler, and nowhere more clearly than in the lecture notes from his last year in Munich when he spoke of history as studiable from both a transcendent and an immanent perspective. Indeed Möhler's position might well be compared with that of Thomas who denied that one could treat the same effect as derivable *partim a Deo et partim a naturali agente* but rather insisted that it arose *totus ab utroque secundum alium modum*.[2]

Möhler's insistence on the truth of both the "religious conception of history," "which refers everything to the absolute cause, to God," and the "pragmatism of history," "which depicts and explains everything in its closest causal relationship and causal nexus,"[3] has consequences both for the world at large and for the Church in particular. It frees the world to be the world, to be an integral system of interlocking causes and effects, a "causal nexus." The explanations offered by scientists and historians, by mathematicians and psychologists, are *real* explanations. The "secular" view of the world is a valid possibility. For the claim advanced by the theologian is not that there exists a domain outside the scope of science, history, mathematics, or psychology, which is open only to the theologian, but rather that, as science, history, mathematics, or psychology are alternative stances toward the whole of reality, so too is theology. The theologian views the same world as the physicist but *secundum alium modum*.

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[1] Friedrich von Hügel, "On the Specific Genius and Capacities of Christianity: Studies in Connection with the Works of Professor Ernst Troeltsch," *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, First Series (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1921), pp. 175ff. He refers specifically to Troeltsch's discussion of the Thomistic treatment of natural and engraced ethics in *Die Sociallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* and asks, "Has Aquinas, on the ample questions here discussed, been anywhere penetrated as delicately and deeply, as generously and justly, as is done here, in these noble sections of a truly great book?" (pp. 176-177).

[2] *Summa contra gentiles* III, c. 70.

[3] Möhler, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2:269.

The Church exists as a datum of this world, a particular community in time and space. Its claim to a divine element in its foundation, its preservation, its end and the means it employs to that end, does not elevate it beyond the possibility of study and criticism by those methods and fields of investigation employed with regard to all human communities. For it is a human community and can seek no exemption from the laws governing human communities. That it is, *secundum alium modum*, divine requires that it also be the subject of theological reflection and this not because of a divine element capable of being separated out from its human embodiment as if it were in part a human and in part a divine community. Rather, it is wholly divine and wholly human and therefore fully a subject of study by the theologian and fully a subject of study by the historian, the sociologist, the political economist, etc. It is wholly human and wholly divine; it is not monophysite.

But neither is it Nestorian. There is but one community which exists in two very different modes and must be examined accordingly. Möhler's maintenance of this point can be seen in his complete rejection of an invisible Church. Under no circumstances will he consent to a Church which is in fact two communities related to one another as means to end. The Church studied by the historian and the sociologist is the same Church of which the theologian speaks. It is the only Church. The "visible" Church, the community as it is seen in history, as it struggles to understand the mysteries by which it lives and to give expression to that understanding in doctrinal formulae, moral precepts, and institutional structures, the community which is composed of members whose reasons for membership vary from sublime insight to childish superstition, the community capable of terrible injustice as well as heroic sacrifice, of fearful scandal as well as luminous example, is the only Church. Therefore, there are not two Churches each accessible to a different method of investigation, as some of the Parisian Averroists were accused of teaching that there are two truths, one open to philosophy and the other to theology. Just as there is one truth which can be studied in many ways each of which must steadfastly refuse to absolutize itself, so there is one Church capable of investigation by various studies no one of which can do without the other. Neither the theologian nor the sociologist is exclusively present to the "real" Church through his method of study. Each is placed before the only Church. Although it may prove not only possible but necessary for the theologian as theologian or the sociologist as sociologist to prescind from the other's results in pursuit of methods proper to his own field, neither one as a member of the Church can ignore the other's work, for both speak the truth about the community to which both belong. There is but one Church wholly open to diverse modes of investigation and reflection.

Thus by restoring the Church to the status of a mystery, Möhler has opened the possiblity for pluralism in the ways in which the Church can be described, while at the same time incorporating ecclesiology into a system of mysteries by his insistence that one's understanding of Church must vary with one's approach to the Trinity, to Christ and to grace. Möhler was not a systematic theologian, but his ecclesiological development was dependent upon the emergence of a systematic theology underpinning it. And always that emerging system had as its goal and norm that "manhood and Godhood must permeate one another."

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